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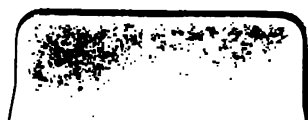
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John C. Anderson. Lith.

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*John C. Stow*  
*Born 17<sup>th</sup> Sept. 1776*

THOUGHTS  
ON  
THE GOSPEL  
OF  
JESUS CHRIST  
THE SON  
OF  
GOD;  
THE SAVIOUR  
OF  
MAN.

BY A  
LAY-MEMBER OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

"Search The Scriptures! For in Them ye think ye have Eternal Life: and They are They, Which Testify of ME."—JOHN v, 39.

"That we, through patience and comfort of The Scriptures, may have hope."—ROMANS xv, 4.

GREENWICH:  
PRINTED BY HENRY S. RICHARDSON,  
STOCKWELL STREET.

1846.


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## P R E F A C E.

“I would know What are the Principles of The Doctrine of CHRIST; and What is That Perfection, unto Which we are Exhorted to go on.”—*Heb. vi, 1.*

May The HOLY SPIRIT Sanctify the wish, and Further the endeavour, that on reading The Gospel of The Incarnate SON of GOD and meditating Thereon, the thoughts of my heart may be founded on True Wisdom, and lead to the promotion of my Soul's hope of Heavenly Peace, and Holiness and Joy, through a lively faith in The Same JESUS CHRIST, our MEDIATOR and ADVOCATE, our Righteousness and our Reconciliation!

 This marginal mark is offered as a suggestion for a limit to daily divisional reading in Families.





## FROM THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW.—CHAP. I.

VERSE 1—"The Book of the Generation of JESUS CHRIST, The Son of David, The Son of Abraham."

The Gospel according to St. Matthew, Which by the arrangement of the Evangelical History, adopted by our Church, first presents Itself, thus opens—Whereby It Points at once to the great Forerunners in faith and holiness, from whom The Man CHRIST JESUS, Very GOD, and Very Man, The Promised MESSIAH, Descended; Declaring that He, (Who was with The FATHER and The HOLY SPIRIT before all Worlds, and by Whom all Worlds were Made) was of the Flesh of David, and of the Seed of Abraham;—of David, who was "*the Man after GOD'S Own Heart*"—1st Samuel xiii, 14; and to whom it was Prophetically Said, in reference to That Same JESUS, "*Thine House and Thy Kingdom shall be Established for Ever before thee*"—2 Sam. vii, 16; and of Abraham, who was characterized as "*The Father of the Faithful*,"—Rom. iv, 11; and in whom, it was repeatedly Pronounced from JEHOVAH that "*all the Families of the Earth should be Blessed*"—Gen. xii, 3., xxviii, 14.

In Relation to These Exceeding Great and Precious Promises Thus Made to Mankind in general in the Persons of Abraham and David, and the Spiritual Blessedness Awaiting their Fulfilment, by way of Illustrating Their more Particular Application, The HOLY GHOST, Whose is The Spirit of Prophecy, had long previously to the Advent of CHRIST upon Earth, thus by the pen of Jeremiah, Proclaimed "*Behold, the Days Come, Saith The Lord, that I will Raise unto David A Righteous BRANCH; and A KING shall Reign and Prosper; and shall Execute Judgment and Justice in the Earth! In His Days Judah shall be Saved and Israel shall dwell safely: and This is His Name, Whereby He shall be Called, The LORD our RIGHTEOUSNESS.*"—Jer. xxiii, 5, 6.

To Spiritual Blessings These Prophecies obviously Point; and The Gospel is Intended to Direct the mind to JESUS as The Great FOUNTAIN from Whence They Flow—as The SOURCE, from Which we may hope for Redemption; and to obtain Reconciliation with The FATHER of Spirits, and Sanctification unto Divine and Immortal Honours—as The SUN of Righteousness, Who Brought Life and Immortality to Light; and Who has Thrown Open to us, in prospect here, and the Means of possessing hereafter, Heaven and Its Everlasting Joys.

The Jews, prior to the Advent of The MESSIAH, were universally in expectation of Him; and Prophecy had led them to calculate on His Being according to the Human Nature, the Descendant both of Abraham and David. The Evangelist therefore, in confirmation of the truth of such an Expectancy, boldly asserts (what, if it had been an untruth might easily and would instantly have been exposed as such by the Adversaries of the Christian faith,) that JESUS, Whom as CHRIST St. Matthew and the other Apostles worshipped, was the Son of David; the Son of Abraham.

Having prefaced with the above general assertion, the Apostle then proceeds to the more minute elucidation of his position by tracing the entire Genealogy of The Great SUBJECT of his History, beginning with Abraham as the Parent Stock. And pre-eminently as this Individual is thus twice put forth in connection with An Event Important beyond all others, excepting Creation, that have affected or can happen to Man, it seems but reasonable to inquire, how this Distinguished Individual spoke and acted, so as to draw down upon him Such Proofs of DIVINE Favour and Preference, that we may, according to our abilities and opportunities, go and do likewise; and, cherishing in its fervency his faith, be Made Partakers, with him, of an Inheritance in The KINGDOM of HEAVEN.

△ The Scriptural History of Abraham begins with his genealogy as the Son of Terah, and a Descendant in the ninth generation from Shem, one of the Sons of Noah—It is thus related, "*Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abram.*"—Gen. xi, 26. And the first incident recorded of him is that of his marriage: *Abram and Nahor (his only then surviving Brother) took them Wives; the name of Abram's wife was Sarai; and the name of Nahor's Wife, Milcah, the Daughter of Haran.*—ib. 29. But the most acceptable Blessing upon such an union was, it seems, for a time Withheld from Abraham, by Him, Whose is the Fruit of the Womb; for it is recorded that "*Sarai was barren; she had no Child.*"—ib. 30. At this time Abraham was probably about 60 years old; and though of that age and married also, he seems to have attached himself with filial reverence to the fate of his Father, and to have submitted to him with the most implicit obedience of a Child; not suffering himself, by an assumed independence, to break that tie of affection and devotion towards a Parent, which indeed should be cherished in every age and act of life. The History thus continues—"And Terah took Abram, his Son, and Lot, the Son of Haran, his (deceased) Son's Son, and Sarai, his Daughter in law, his Son Abram's Wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees to go into the Land of Canaan: and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there."—ib. 31. In this situation Abraham continued for about 15 years, neither withdrawing his allegiance from his Father, though he was stricken in years, and incapable of advancing the welfare of his Family; nor his attachment from his Wife, though she had not crowned him with the glory of an Offspring. On the death of his Father which occurred in Haran (ib. 32.), Abraham had had a most unequivocal Testimony Borne to the piety of his heart, and the uprightness of his conduct, by the most Express Avowal of The DIVINE Favour and Preference towards him, in a Revelation of The ALMIGHTY'S Will on his behalf, thus Recorded—"Now The LORD had Said unto Abram, 'Get thee out of thy Country and from thy Kindred and from thy Father's House, unto a Land, that I will Shew thee; and I will Make of thee a Great Nation; and I will Bless thee, and Make thy Name Great: and thou shalt be a blessing; and I will Bless them that bless thee; and Curse him, that curseth thee: and in thee shall all Families of the Earth be Blessed.'"—Gen. xii, 1 to 3. Great as was the Reward Promised on an obedience to This Command, yet Extending as It did, to a separation from the strong ties of Kindred and long indulged Connection; and Pointing to a hope beyond the natural reason of Man to justify, it is only in the perfection of Faith, that we can look for a solution of the principle, which influenced (as we shall see) Abraham to so ready an obedience; a principle of confidence in The Promises of GOD, that should actuate every Human breast, to which the knowledge of The LORD hath been Revealed: for "*Hath He Said? And shall He not Do It?*" or Who, that ever trusted in Him, hath been Forsaken? "*So Abram departed, as The LORD had Spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old, when he departed out of Haran.*"

*And Abram took Sarai his Wife, and Lot, his Brother's Son, and all their substance, that they had gathered, and the Souls that they had gotten in Haran : and they went forth to go into the Land of Canaan ; and into the Land of Canaan they came : and Abram passed through the Land unto the place of Sichem, unto the Plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the Land. And The LORD Appeared unto Abram and Said ' Unto thy Seed will I Give this Land ! ' And there builded he an Altar unto The LORD, Who Appeared unto him. And he removed from thence unto a Mountain on the east of Beth-el, and pitched his tent, having Beth-el on the west and Hai on the east ; and there he builded an Altar unto The LORD ; and called upon the Name of The LORD."*—Gen. xii, 4 to 8. On the first exercise of a docile and submissive Spirit The DIVINE Regard is Manifested ; and Renewed Encouragement Given to persevere in That Way, Which Leadeth unto Life Eternal. Oh, that an equal willingness and obedience emanated from every bosom, to which The HOLY SPIRIT Offers Its Admonitions, or The Holy Book of Life Its Incitements ; and that, like Abraham, having tasted, in our hearts and spirits, of the Ever-Enduring Goodness and Mercy of GOD, we did like Abraham offer up, on every occasion, upon the altar of Faith the Acceptable incense of praise and thanksgiving !—Submitting to the Parental office of Guardian to his deceased Brother's Son, Abraham generously unites their fortunes and their destinies ; and is equally provident of his Nephew's welfare, as of his own. But when jealousies and disagreements unhappily arose between their respective Servants, Abraham, instead of assuming the authority of dictatorial power, or siding, under the influence of natural prejudice, in favour of his own Dependents, suggested, with all the prudence and feeling of the most disinterested Umpire, the means of avoiding such dissensions in future ; thus expressing himself to Lot—*" Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my Herdsmen and thy Herdsmen ! For we be Brethren. Is not the whole Land before thee ? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me ! If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right ; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left."*—Gen. xiii, 8, 9. Thus yielding even to a Nephew the palm of superiority in relinquishing to him the prior right of election : for Abraham knew what the Great Gentle Advocate for The Gospel has since instructed us, that it was right *" to give place unto wrath rather than to avenge ourselves "*—Rom. xii, 19 ; and that *" no Man should seek his own ; but every Man another's wealth."*—1 Cor. x, 24 ; and he knew also What The FOUNTAIN of Wisdom hath since Revealed, both in Letter and Spirit (and which we shall find, if we but make the trial), that *" Blessed are the Peace Makers ! For they shall be Called The Children of GOD."*—Matt, v, 9. When driven by necessity to take up arms for the restoration of his Nephew's person from captivity, though the further fruit of his skill and valour was the obtaining the treasures of the discomfited Enemy whom he had pursued principally with his own Servants, yet did Abraham from pious motives and a sacred observance of a vow he had made, refuse to partake of those treasures, though pressed so to do by the King, Abraham saying unto him, *" I have lift up mine hand unto The LORD, The MOST HIGH GOD, The POSSESSOR of Heaven and Earth, that I will not take from a thread even to a shoe latchet, and that I will not take anything that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, ' I have made Abram rich ! ' save that which the young Men have eaten, and the portion of the Men which went <sup>with</sup> me, Aner, Eschol, and Mamre : let them take their portion !"*—Gen. xiv, 21 to 24. But though scrupulously mindful of his vow in not appropriating to himself any of the spoils of the victory, he was not regardless of what was due to the Church and Honour of GOD : for he gave unto Melchizedec, who was the Priest of The MOST HIGH GOD, tithes of all that he had taken ; and in return received what is of infinitely more value than earthly riches, this

fervent prayer of a Man of GOD for Blessings on his head, and the most solemn testimony to his own faithfulness—" *Blessed be Abram of The MOST HIGH GOD, POSSESSOR of Heaven and Earth ! and Blessed be The MOST HIGH GOD, Which hath Delivered thine Enemies into thy hand !*"—Gen. xiv, 19, 20. On this incident in the life of Abraham it is very luminously observed in the Epistle to the Hebrews (after a reference to Melchizedec's as the Order of Priesthood, which JESUS, The Great OFFERER of the Acceptable Sacrifice of Himself, in Atonement for the sins of the whole World, and for the Sanctification by The SPIRIT of every penitent Believer Therein, had for ever Adopted agreeably to the Prophetic Annunciation "*THOU art A PRIEST for ever after the Order of Melchizedec*"—Ps. cx, 4.) "*For this Melchizedec, King of Salem, Priest of The MOST HIGH GOD, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the Kings and blessed him ; to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all ; first being by interpretation King of Righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of Peace ; without Father, without Mother, without descent (or pedigree) having neither beginning of days, nor end of life ; but made like unto The SON of GOD, abideth a Priest continually. Now consider (says the Inspired Writer) how great this Man was, unto whom even the Patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils.*"

△—Heb. vii, 1 to 4. Thus is Abraham's zeal for his GOD, and the Honour of His Spiritual Service portrayed both in the Old and New Testament.—Knowing that all Good Gifts are from The LORD, and that the Fruit of the Womb is His Reward, Abraham, though long married and without an Offspring, yet despaired not of being Blest with a Progeny, if The ALMIGHTY should so Decree it. To this end in the earnestness of faith his supplications were poured forth, saying, "*LORD, GOD ! What wilt Thou Give me ? Seeing I go Childless ; and the Steward of my House is this Eliezer of Damascus. And Abram said, ' Behold ! to me Thou hast Given no Seed ! And lo ! One born in my house is mine Heir.' And, behold ! The Word of The LORD Came unto him, Saying, ' This shall not be thine Heir ; but he, that shall come forth out of thine own bowels, shall be thine Heir.' And He Brought him forth abroad, and Said ' Look now toward Heaven, and tell the Stars, if thou be able to number them !' and He Said unto him, ' So shall thy Seed be !' And he believed in The LORD : and He Counted it to him for righteousness.*"—Gen. xv, 2 to 6. Thus, as St. Paul said of him, "*Abraham against hope believed in hope, that he might become the Father of many Nations, according to That, Which was Spoken, ' So shall thy Seed be !'*"—Rom. iv, 18 ; that is, against the common probabilities of Nature that he should have Descendants without number, who was thitherto, and had so long been without Issuc, he yet cherished the fulness of hope in the confidence that as GOD had Said, so would He in His Own Time Bring it to pass. And this act of faith, though unaccompanied, as it should seem, by any profession, or outward act of veneration or sacrifice, was by Him, Who Knoweth the secrets of all hearts, Reckoned to Abraham for Righteousness—To us Thereby holding out the comforting Assurance that the silent trust of a pious heart in the Promises of GOD will be Attended, if not here, yet assuredly hereafter, with His Blessing.

In the exercise of Conjugal affection the character of Abraham seems also to have been exemplary, for to Sarah did he refer the disposal of Hagar on the Latter's contemptuous treatment of her ; of which treatment Sarah complained, when Abraham said to her, "*Behold ! thy Maid is in thine hand : Do to her as it pleaseth thee !*"—Gen. xvi, 6. At the same time the tenderness and solicitude of his Parental feelings are conspicuous in his intercessory prayer for Ishmael, his Offspring by Hagar ; for in addressing JEHOVAH on his behalf, he asked, not for riches, or honours, or dominion, neither for length of days, but "*that Ishmael might live before GOD !*"—Gen. xvii, 18.

"And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, The LORD Appeared to Abram, and Said unto him, 'I am The ALMIGHTY GOD! Walk before Me; and be thou Perfect! And I will Make My Covenant between Me and thee; and will Multiply thee exceedingly.' And Abram fell on his face. And GOD Talked with him, Saying, 'As for Me, behold, My Covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a Father of many Nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham, for a Father of many Nations have I Made thee: and I will Make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will Make Nations of thee: and Kings shall come out of thee. And I will Establish My Covenant between Me and thee, and thy Seed after thee in their Generations, for an Everlasting Covenant to be A GOD unto thee and to thy Seed after thee. And I will Give unto thee and to thy Seed after thee, the Land wherein thou art a Stranger, all the Land of Canaan for an everlasting Possession, and I will be their GOD.' And GOD Said unto Abraham, 'Thou shalt keep My Covenant therefore, thou and thy Seed after thee, in their Generations. This is My Covenant, which ye shall keep, between Me and you, and thy Seed after thee; Every Man ~~and~~ Child among you shall be circumcised. And it shall be a Token of the Covenant between Me and you: and he, that is eight days old, shall be circumcised among you, every Man Child in your Generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any Stranger, which is not of thy Seed.' And GOD Said unto Abraham, 'As for Sarai, thy Wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be: and I will Bless her; and Give thee a Son also of her; yea, I will Bless her; and she shall be a Mother of Nations—Kings of People shall be of her.' Then Abraham fell upon his face and laughed, and said in his heart, 'Shall a Child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?' And Abraham said unto GOD, 'O that Ishmael might live before Thee!' And GOD Said, 'Sarah, thy Wife, shall bear thee a Son indeed: and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will Establish My Covenant with him for an Everlasting Covenant, and with his Seed after him. And as for Ishmael, I have Heard thee; Behold, I have Blessed him, and will Make him fruitful, and will Multiply him exceedingly; twelve Princes shall he beget; and I will Make him a great Nation. But My Covenant will I Establish with Isaac; which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year.' And He Left off Talking with him; and GOD Went up from Abraham. And Abraham took Ishmael, his Son, and All that were born in his house, and All that were bought with his money, every Male among the Men of Abraham's house, and circumcised them in the same day, as GOD had Said unto him: and Abraham was ninety years old and nine, when he was circumcised."—Gen. xvii, 1 to 13. 15 to 24.

The change of name from Abram to Abraham, was from that of a "distinguished Father" to that of a "Father of many Generations;" and that of Sarai to Sarah, was of a "Royal Person" to that of a Royal Mother."

The most prompt and implicit obedience to the Command of GOD was manifested by Abraham in his circumcising himself at the advanced age of ninety and nine years; though in the moment of the Utterance of That Promise of Blessedness in a Progeny by Sarah, of which that sacrifice was a primary Condition, he is said even to have laughed (or perhaps smiled), not, it is only reasonable to suppose, contemptuously or in distrust of GOD'S Power or Purpose, but that he and Sarah, who were then Both so stricken in years, should have the joy of being Parents.

Devotedness to the Service and Honour of GOD seems to have been ever uppermost in his mind; for on the Visitation to him of The LORD and two Attendant Angels, in the Plains of Mamre, Abraham ran to meet Them; and with equal humility and hospitality intreated that he might be Permitted to entertain Them; bowing himself toward the ground, and saying, "My LORD!

*If now I have found Favour in Thy Sight, Pass not away, I pray Thee, from Thy Servant! Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your Feet; and Rest Yourselves under the tree! And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and Comfort ye Your Hearts! After that Ye shall Pass on! For therefore are Ye Come to Your Servant. And they said, 'So do, as thou hast said!' And Abram hastened into the tent unto Sarai, and said, 'Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it; and make cakes upon the hearth!' And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young Man; and he hasted to dress it; and he took butter and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before Them: and he stood by Them under the tree; and They did Eat."*—Gen. xviii, 1 to 8. By the example of a Patriarch, as also by the admonition of an Apostle, are we encouraged to use hospitality, and to "entertain Strangers; for thereby Some have entertained Angels unawares."—Heb. xiii, 2.

Order and regularity prevailed in the government of Abraham's Family; and these virtues were crowned by the manifestation of that most valuable Parental and Magisterial influence, the inducing to walk in the ways of Godliness: for of him did The LORD Say, "*I Know him, that he will command his Children and his Household after him: and they shall keep the Way of The LORD, to do justice and judgment.*"—Gen. xviii, 19. If they, that turn Many to Righteousness, shall shine as the Stars of Heaven, how great is the encouragement to tread in these steps of our Father Abraham; and to strive both by ourselves and our Households to serve The LORD! And how full of reflective joy and of prospective hope must be the pillow of death to every One, who, from the same motive that actuated Abraham, hath in this respect gone and done likewise.

Through the promptings and influence of Brotherly love and perfect charity towards Lot and his Family and Connections, did Abraham venture so perseveringly to intercede on behalf of the Inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, when the Phial of The ALMIGHTY'S Wrath was Threatened to be Poured out upon them. In the innocency of his own heart, and not even suspecting, perhaps, the extent of the corruption of Others, he was led to reason with GOD, and to supplicate that the Guilty and the Guiltless might not be Confounded in the Awful Doom from the DIVINE Displeasure; For "*Abraham stood before The LORD, and drew near and said, Wilt Thou also Destroy the Righteous with the Wicked? Peradventure there be Fifty Righteous within the City: wilt Thou also Destroy and not Spare the Place for the Fifty Righteous that are therein? That be Far from Thee to Do after this manner; to Slay the Righteous with the Wicked; and that the Righteous should be as the Wicked! That be Far from Thee! Shall not The JUDGE of all the Earth Do Right?*"—Gen. xviii, 22 to 25. What a mixture of humanity and humility is here observable! How beautifully are those characteristics of Spiritual excellence here portrayed! Abraham felt for his Fellow Creatures, and in seeking for their Delivery from the Vengeance That was Threatened by Him to Whom Vengeance Belongs, he did not withhold his acknowledgment of Immutable Justice in the DIVINE Decrees. *The fervent, effectual prayer of a righteous Man availeth much:* and large as must have been the then Population of these Places, yet, as will afterwards appear, if Ten righteous Souls had been found therein, the Destruction of the Whole would have been Averted by Abraham's pious intercession. For "*The LORD Said 'If I Find in Sodom Fifty Righteous within the City, then I will Spare all the City for their sakes.'*"—Ver. 26. Thus also do we see how rich may be the fruits of a life of Righteousness, even in the life that is; and that not only to ourselves, but to Others, our Kindred, our Neighbours, or our Nation. "*And Abraham answered and said, 'Behold, now I have taken upon me to speak unto The LORD, which am but dust and ashes.'*"—Ver. 27. How highly doth this abasement of the pious

Abraham exalt his character in our estimation! Upright as he was (humanly speaking, for before GOD the Heavens themselves are not pure) in all his ways, and holy in all his dealings, he yet knew himself without hope, but in the Forbearance and Mercy of his CREATOR: he knew that Man was Formed from the dust of the Earth, and that worms would feed sweetly on his body; that naked came he into the world; and naked would he return thither; he knew that it was not for the clay to say unto the Potter, "Why hast thou formed me thus?" he knew that All Things were from The LORD, and that His Goodness was over All His Works; that His Wisdom is Infinite, and His Ways past finding out: he knew therefore, and devoutly acknowledged the Great Truth, that The JUDGE of All the Earth would Do Right: and, in effect, Abraham made it his prayer, that through the deceivableness of sin his benevolence might not be made an occasion of sin, and this in a manner so meek and Spiritually-minded that the greatest fervour of devotion cannot exceed. Through diffidence of his own claim to a Further Extension of DIVINE Consideration and Clemency, not less perhaps, than from the hope that the Number of Others, righteous as himself, might not be so miserably small, did he thus mediatorially continue his communing with GOD—"Peradventure there shall lack Five of the Fifty Righteous! Wilt Thou Destroy all the City for lack of Five?"—Ver. 28. Abraham did not arrogantly doubt What GOD had in substance Declared, that there were not Fifty Righteous Persons there; but proceeded upon the full belief in The DIVINE Word that the fact was so; and hoping that there might be All of Fifty but Five, renewed his intercessory supplication, after GOD had Answered and Said "*If I Find there Forty and Five, I will not Destroy it.*"—Ver. 28. Emboldened by This Gracious Attention to his prayer, Abraham, continuing to be actuated by the two-fold influence of diffidence of himself and desire for the Salvation of Others, again addresses The FOUNTAIN of Mercy, saying yet again, "*Peradventure there shall be Forty found there! And GOD Said 'I will not Destroy it for Forty's sake.'*"—Ver. 29. In like manner did Abraham gradually increase in the supplication, by gradually decreasing in his estimate of the Number for whose sakes it was made; and as Readily did The LORD Express a Willingness to Grant his prayer, if the ground on which it proceeded, had sustained it; as exhibited in the succeeding Scriptural Narrative. "*And Abraham said unto The LORD, 'Oh Let not The LORD be Angry! and I will speak: Peradventure there shall Thirty be found there!'* And The LORD Said '*I will not Destroy it if I Find Thirty there.*' And Abraham said, '*Behold, now, I have taken upon me to speak unto The LORD: Peradventure there shall be Twenty found there!'* And He Said '*I will not Destroy it for Twenty's sake.*' And Abraham said, '*Oh Let not The LORD be Angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure Ten shall be found there!'* And He Said '*I will not Destroy it for Ten's sake.*' And The LORD Went His Way, as soon as He had Left Communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place."—Ver. 30 to 33. Abraham did not presumptuously ask that the City might be Spared for his own sake; which was a further evidence of his humility after the Concessions previously Made to him by The GOD of Mercy and of Power. Neither did Abraham call in question the Intimation of The DEITY that the Number of the Righteous (if there were any save Lot and Members of his Family) was less than he had advanced his hope of the City's Preservation upon: he knew that all Things were Known unto GOD, from the beginning of the World, even from Everlasting: and that as The LORD had Said, If Ten Righteous were found Destruction would not be Visited upon the City, Abraham felt assured that there were not that Number, and that the Impending Desolation had therefore but too Justly Its Course. A City so wholly lost to reason and religion as, with a numerous Population, to be without




ten righteous Persons, must be universally acknowledged to be a fit Object for The DIVINE Jealousy, as well as amenable to The DIVINE Chastisement; and The ALMIGHTY'S Compassionate Regard for Those that were His, though less than even half the number of ten, amidst the Inhabitants of two extensive Cities, was Manifested in His Selecting Lot, his Wife and two Daughters, from the otherwise universal Annihilation. Such also, if not here, will assuredly Hereafter be the Discriminating Decision of The JUDGE of Quick and Dead, in Separating the Righteous from the Wicked, and Saving the Former from the Fire that will never be quenched, but into which the Latter, with the Devil and his Angels, will be irretrievably Cast.

△ If Abraham were faithless to A Protecting and Over-Ruling PROVIDENCE, in avowing himself, before Abimelech, to be the Brother rather than the Husband of Sarah, whereby Abimelech was nearly unconsciously induced to commit the act of adultery—this is an instance of frailty, which we must lament in so otherwise exalted a Character, and shall do well to avoid: for the reason assigned by the Patriarch for his conduct on this occasion, namely, because he thought, "*Surely the fear of GOD was not in that Place*"—Gen. xx, 11, should not, in a pious mind, have deliberately counselled such fabrication or evasion; since he could not, on due consideration, but have felt and acknowledged, that GOD can Strike the hardest or most impious heart with fear, or Disappoint its purposes of evil. - But though distrustful of Abimelech's piety and moral virtue previously to the development of his character; yet, when the excellence and purity of it were manifested, and his bounty and protection extended to Abraham, he was not ungrateful nor unmindful of the favours conferred, but put forth, doubtless from the bottom of his heart, a prayer on behalf of his Benefactor, that The LORD would Remove from Abimelech and his House the Judgment of barrenness with Which they had been Visited, as it is Written "*So Abraham prayed unto God! And GOD Healed Abimelech, and his Wife, and his Maid Servants; and they bare Children.*"—ib. xx, 17.

On the birth of Isaac the same reverential observance of the Appointed Ceremony of Circumcision did Abraham perform; and in devout gratefulness to Him, with Whom is the Fruit of the Womb, did he, on the weaning of the Child, give a sumptuous entertainment, as thus recorded with the connecting circumstances. "*And The LORD Visited Sarah, as He had Said; and The LORD did unto Sarah as He had Spoken, for Sarah conceived and bare Abraham a Son in his old age, at the Set Time of which GOD had Spoken to him. And Abraham called the name of his Son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac: and Abraham circumcised his Son Isaac, being eight days old, as GOD had Commanded him: and Abraham was an hundred years old, when his Son Isaac was born unto him. And the Child grew and was weaned; and Abraham made a great feast the same day that Isaac was weaned.*"—Gen. xxi, 1 to 5. 8. The force of Parental affection and an anxious regard for the welfare of his Offspring displayed themselves in the sorrow Abraham manifested at Sarah's proposed banishment of Ishmael for his contempt of her on the birth of Isaac. Attached as he was to Sarah, it is yet not improbable that the conflict between Conjugal and Parental feelings would have continued much longer, and the result have been questionable, had not The VOICE of Inspiration, Which to Abraham was never Uttered in vain, Dictated the Course he was to pursue—as is thus Detailed in Holy Writ. "*And Sarah saw the Son of Hagar, the Egyptian, which she had borne unto Abraham, mocking, wherefore she said unto Abraham, 'Cast out this Bond Woman and her Son! For the Son of this Bond Woman shall not be Heir with my Son, even with Isaac.'* And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight, because of his Son. And GOD Said unto Abraham, '*Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of*

*the Lad and because of thy Bond Woman! In all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice! For in Isaac shall thy SEED be Called. And also of the Son of the Bond Woman will I Make a Nation; because he is thy Seed.' And Abraham rose up early in the morning and took bread and a bottle of water and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the Child, and sent her away.*"—Gen. xxi, 9 to 14. Our Blessed SAVIOUR Said, "*If any Man come to Me, and hate not his Father and Mother, and Wife and Children, and Brethren and Sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My Disciple.*"—Luke xiv, 26. Strong as was Abraham's attachment to the Child of his own loins, yet stronger, and deservedly so, was his attachment to That BEING, from Whom he and All Creation derived their Existence and Support. In compliance therefore with The DIVINE Injunction, he acted towards his own Child as though he hated him, comparatively with his love for his MAKER'S Will, sending the Child into a Desert Wilderness, with no other Human Protector than his agonized and helpless Mother. But Thy Ways, O GOD, are not our ways; neither are Thy Thoughts our thoughts; for it is with Thee to Save by Few as by Many: and What Thou hast Promised Thou wilt Surely Bring to Pass. In firm reliance on the Sufficiency of The ALMIGHTY'S Protection, and in confidence of His Fulfilling His Revealed Intention, the faithful Abraham sent from his hospitable roof the once Partner of his bed and the first Child of his bosom; and that destitute of other provision than a little bread and water, without Human Guard, or any recommendatory introduction. But he knew that he placed them under the Care and Adoption of An All Wise PROVIDENCE, with Whom is All Power to Save both Body and Soul, and Who Alone Dispenseth That Bread and Water, which Endure unto Life Eternal.

As a further instance of gratitude and goodness of heart, we find Abraham,  in compliance with the solicitation of Abimelech (who acknowledged the Patriarch's influence with The LORD of the Universe) that he would not deal hostilely with him or his Descendants through two Generations (beyond which it was scarcely in Human probability that Abraham himself should be alive), binding himself by an oath, uttered as under the consciousness of the Presence of The Omniscient, though Invisible, GOD, pledging himself to the return of the good offices, which during his stay in the Land of Gerar he had received from Abimelech. The Favour with Which The ALMIGHTY had Visited Abimelech for Abraham's Sake, might to a worldly mind have seemed sufficient to have offered the Assurance of his word; but Abraham in the ingenuousness of his heart was determined to evince with the utmost solemnity the sacredness of his esteem for Abimelech, and to requite his protection with no unsparing hand. It is hence that we may reap the benefit of an Example in a return for kindnesses received; not to limit, but with our Lives, both the will and the effort to serve or countenance Those who have served and benefited us, and though not with an oath-bound vow so to do, yet in a spirit of equally conscious obligation, as in the Record of GOD, Who Trieth the heart and thought, and Who hath Especially Commanded that *we love One Another*.

"*Open reproof is better than secret love*" said the Wisest of Mankind. "*Let there be no strife between me and thee, nor between thy Servants and my Servants!*" have we seen the righteous Abraham before propose; and on the occasion of Abimelech's Servants ungraciously, if not unwarrantably, driving Abraham's Herdsmen from a well that they had habitually used, Abraham did not fly to arms, to defend his right, or to support his claim, nor did he pray to GOD to Bring Destruction on Those, who had so injured or insulted him; but he openly and manfully reasoned with Abimelech himself, as the local Fountain of Authority, on the impropriety of the conduct that his Retainers had observed,

perhaps imagining that Abimelech had sanctioned the proceeding, or would at least countenance his Officers' conduct. But no sooner was the matter declared to have been without the privity even of Abimelech, but a feeling of sorrow also thereat manifested on the part of the King, than Abraham, in the spirit of Christian peacefulness, not only acquiesced in the apologetic explanation, but bound even still tighter, by a mutual covenant, the bond of reciprocal cordiality and good understanding between Abimelech and himself; and to prevent in future a repetition of such interruption, gave a full price to Abimelech for the well, though Abraham had had the labour and expense of digging it. Thus was indeed instanced what it is "*to give place unto wrath,*" by letting it pass over as the unheeded wind. And in veneration of The GOD of Peace, as well as of All Power, JEHOVAH, The EVERLASTING, did Abraham erect another Altar on the spot to manifest his gratitude, and to make public his sense of The DIVINE Interposition on his behalf. The Scriptural Narrative is thus—"*And Abraham reproved Abimelech because of a well of water, which Abimelech's Servants had violently taken away. And Abimelech said, 'I wot not who hath done this thing; neither didst thou tell me; neither yet heard I of it but to-day.' And Abraham took sheep and oren, and gave them unto Abimelech; and Both of them made a covenant. And Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock by themselves. And Abimelech said unto Abraham, 'What mean these seven ewe lambs which thou hast set by themselves?' And he said 'For these seven ewe lambs shalt thou take of my hand, that they may be a witness unto me, that I have digged this well.' Wherefore he called that place Beer-sheba; because there they sware Both of them: thus they made a covenant at Beer-sheba. Then Abimelech rose up, and Phicol, the chief Captain of his Host; and they returned into the Land of the Philistines. And Abraham planted a grove in Beer-sheba, and called there on the Name of The LORD, The Everlasting GOD: and Abraham sojourned in the Philistines' Land many days.*"—Gen. xxi, 25 to 34.

△ But the great manifestation of Abraham's devotedness to The DIVINE Will, of his faith in the Power, and of his hope in the Mercies of GOD, more especially in the Life to Come, was his ready acquiescence in The ALMIGHTY'S Command to sacrifice Isaac, his beloved Son, the only Fruit of his marriage, the last earthly Prop and Consolation of his declining years; that Son, through whom the Prospect of unnumbered Generations to himself, and of Universal Blessedness to Mankind, had been Laid Open. For it is Recorded that "*GOD did Tempt Abraham* (or put by trial his faith to the test), *and Said unto him 'Take now thy Son, thine only Son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the Land of Moriah; and offer him there for a Burnt Offering upon one of the Mountains, which I will Tell thee of!'*"—Gen. xxii, 1, 2. Ishmael had been severed from his embrace; and now indeed, with infinitely more propriety, might Abraham have used the pathetic expression of his Grandson Jacob, when a second Child out of Twelve was only liable to be separated from him—"If I am bereaved of my Children I am bereaved!" for Isaac alone remained to Abraham; and great as was, doubtless, his love towards that Son, yet the very Mention of that love, when Followed by An Injunction unhesitatingly and instantly to sacrifice upon an Altar of Burnt Offering the Object of it, was calculated to enkindle all a Parent's tenderest feelings, in the recollection of all the engaging attractions and manly virtues which Abraham had traced in a Son of Such Promise, now about twenty-six years of age. Though not looking beyond this life, a Parent who has had the chief desire of his heart gratified in the possession of a Child of entire endearment and attachment, the agony of feeling, to which Such a Command was calculated to give rise, would be obvious, and deeply sympathized in. But vital Faith, which, though small even as a single grain of mustard seed, has been Said

to be able to remove mountains, enabled Abraham to overcome the resistance of the most powerful of natural feelings; and knowing that The CREATOR could not be The AUTHOR of Evil, he trusted implicitly in the Ways of His Especial Appointment, however for a season Inscrutable, resting on the conviction that with the temptation, if to Infinite Wisdom and Goodness it Seemed Fitting, there would Open to him, as the faithful Servant of his LORD, a way to escape. He knew also that though his Son's body might be reduced to ashes by material fire, his Soul would rise and be Irradiated with a flame of Glory amidst Seraphs and Saints in Heaven: and though *affliction for a season* might be his own portion, *yet that such affliction*, if resignedly and meekly borne, *would work out for him*, as the result of his obedience unto death, *a far more Exceeding and Eternal Weight of Glory: for he looked not wholly or principally at the Things which are seen, but at the Things which are not seen; knowing that the Things which are seen, are temporal, but that the Things Which are not Seen are Eternal.* The Narrative of his ready observance of The DIVINE Mandate is thus, "*And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young Men with him, and Isaac, his Son; and clave the wood for the Burnt Offering; and rose up, and went unto the Place, of which GOD had Told him.*"—Gen. xxii. 3. Abraham had perseveringly interceded for the Inhabitants of Sodom: he had prayed that the Judgment Visited upon Abimelech and his House might be Withdrawn; but he prays not for the Deliverance of his own much-loved Son from a premature death, and that even by his Father's hand, and the dissolution of his body in the flames. On the contrary, as soon as The ALMIGHTY had Notified in a Vision the Place for the Sacrifice, even at the dawn of day he began to put in order all things for fulfilling the Command. "*Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the Place afar off.*"—ver. 4. Thus it seems that throughout a journey of more than two days was Parental feeling exposed in conflict with obedience unto Holiness; the most engaging companion of his travels rendering more poignant his sufferings, by striving, in all the fondness and attentiveness of filial reverence, to dissipate the studied silence and seemingly burthened mind of his loving and beloved Father. But not only was Abraham willing to die Issueless, if so The LORD of Life Decreed, but to become a Sacrifice himself, if so Directed, since he felt in the fulness of faith that there would be Reserved, through The DIVINE Mercies, both for his Son and for himself, a Life that would never end, and the Riches of an Heavenly Inheritance that would never fail. To execute, therefore, What his CREATOR Appointed was the paramount desire of his mind; to know What was That Will was the first object of his prayerful inquiry, and to fulfil It the sure effect of that knowledge.—In every day should we seek in the same spirit to know The LORD, and to find the Way He would Choose us to take, or the Sacrifice He would Encourage us to make; and not suffer either toil or trouble, either the wish for life, or the fear of death, and still less the allurements of Sin or the subtleties of Satan, to oppose our progress and performance!—For what attractions to the Things of this life can we have, that Abraham had not? What grief can we experience that could surpass that of Abraham, when, lifting up his eyes, they were met by the appearance of the Place, in which the agony of his heart was to follow the exterminating office of his hand. Abraham had been faithful in many things, but one thing more was Deemed needful to test the deeply-rooted efficacy of that faith in the act of obedience to The DIVINE Appointment, and to prove to Mankind at large how unhesitating that Spirit is in the true Servants of The MOST HIGH. And shall we, for whom The Spiritual SON of Abraham was in truth Sacrificed at the Will of His Heavenly FATHER, refuse to give up our transitory possessions, our carnal desires, or our Earthly Ties of Kindred or Connection, in compliance with

The DIVINE Decree; and, stifling or curbing our natural emotions, hesitate to offer up to GOD the Sacrifice of a meek and resigned and confiding Spirit? *“And Abraham said unto his young Men, Abide ye here with the ass! And I and the Lad will go yonder, and worship, and come again to you.”*—ver. 5. However high might have been the hopes of the Patriarch, that the Sentence against his Son would be Rescinded, he could not have been altogether divested of fear, and his saying, that he and his Son would return to the young Men was, doubtless, not in the arrogance of presumption that such would be the case; but that, if life should be Spared them, they Both would do so; and Abraham's firm trust was that, as The LORD Delighteth in Mercy, He might even in the latest moment not Willingly Afflict, but Spare, and not Punish. *“And Abraham took the wood of the Burnt Offering, and laid it upon Isaac, his Son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went Both of them together. And Isaac spake unto Abraham, his Father, and said, ‘My Father!’ And he said, ‘Here am I, my Son.’ And he said, ‘Behold the fire and the wood! but where is the lamb for a Burnt Offering?’”*—ver. 6, 7. The question was perfectly natural for the Son to put; but how deeply and piercingly must it have struck into the heart of the Father! yet, though weak as was the Flesh, still, when Supported by The SPIRIT, it was strong enough to overcome this further trial of Faith. And to All, who will seek for That Aid with Abraham's piety, It will Arrive and Prove more than Sufficient to Overcome whatever temptation or trial may be found in opposition. *“And Abraham said, ‘My Son! GOD will Provide Himself a lamb for a Burnt Offering.’ So they went Both of them together; and they came to the Place which GOD had Told him of: and Abraham built an Altar there, and laid the wood in order; and bound Isaac, his Son, and laid him on the Altar upon the wood: and Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his Son.”*—ver. 8 to 10. Steadfast to the purpose of his mind, however wounding to his heart in this instance, of following implicitly The DIVINE Direction, Abraham went undeviatingly and perseveringly forward in the prosecution of the great work Set before him; neither turning to the right hand nor to the left; and, having put his hand to the plough, not looking behind; nor pausing to ask of GOD, “Should this thing be?” What The ALMIGHTY, Who has Given us an Immortal Spirit, and the Assurance of inward Peace and endless Joy in the Life to Come, hath Appointed us to do, it is our bounden duty and truest interest, in our several Appointments, to execute. The end of this life (a life which is full of trouble and without any continuing happiness,) Abraham justly regarded as but the Beginning of Another, where there are no more sickness or sorrow, or interruptions to perfect Bliss to Those, who have lived and died in the true Faith: and therefore, contemplating his CREATOR as The FOUNTAIN of Love and Mercy, Abraham rested his confidence in the Spiritual Salvation and Glorious Immortality of his Son Isaac. But large as was the measure of his own faith, yet could he not equally trust in that of Others; it was therefore that he revealed not his purpose either to the Men, who had journeyed as his Servants with him, or to his own Son, lest they might seek to divert him from that purpose: but on the contrary, he covered by silence, or by such answers as checked the rising of suspicion, his real design. Still the great work he had in hand, which was emblematical of GOD'S Own Wonderful Work of Mercy to Mankind in general, by the Sacrifice of His Only and Justly Beloved SON JESUS CHRIST, was proceeded in—the Appointed Place is reached—the Altar of Worship is raised—the Sacrifice for dedication is bound—and the instrument of destruction is uplifted, when the hand, that was to guide it, was Arrested by The Same ALMIGHTY VOICE, That thus had Prompted its action—an action, which but in such a Cause, would have condemned the memory of Abraham to execration in all future time.

*"And the Angel of The LORD Called unto him out of Heaven, and Said, 'Abraham! Abraham!' And he said, 'Here am I.' And He Said, 'Lay not thine hand upon the Lad! neither do thou anything unto him! for now I Know, that thou fearest GOD; Seeing thou hast not withheld thy Son, thine only Son, from Me!' And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold, behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went, and took the ram, and offered him up for a Burnt Offering, in the stead of his Son: and Abraham called the name of that Place 'JEHOVAH-Jirah,' as it is said to this day, In the Mount of The LORD it shall be seen. And the Angel of The LORD Called unto Abraham out of Heaven the second time, and Said, 'By Myself have I Sworn,' Saith The LORD, 'for because thou hast done this Thing, and hast not withheld thy Son, thine only Son; that in Blessing I will Bless thee, and in Multiplying I will Multiply thy Seed as the Stars of the Heaven, and as the Sand which is upon the Sea shore: and thy Seed shall possess the gate of his Enemies: and in thy SEED shall all the Nations of the Earth be Blessed; because thou hast obeyed My VOICE.'"*

—Gen. xxii, 11 to 18. It is thus that the holy fear of GOD, which most effectually manifests itself by a reverential observance of His Commandments, most assuredly obtains the Favourable Countenance of The MOST HIGH, Rendering us, through the influence of our faith in CHRIST JESUS, Spiritually, at least, of the Seed of Abraham, and Participators in That Blessedness So Promised, and So Fulfilled. We are here Placed in a state of trial and temptation, and in different ways our faith in the Word and Will of The ALMIGHTY is Tested. Though not Called upon to yield up a Son in Sacrifice, or to give the fruit of our bodies for the sins of our Souls, we are Called upon to surrender up our whole Selves, in Body, Soul, and Spirit, to the Will and Direction of our MAKER, and in spirit to crucify ourselves with our affections and lusts, our passions and appetites, which, as warring against His Will, war against our Souls and their Everlasting Interests: by so doing we may confidently hope to be Sharers in the Boundless Blessings of our Great and Gracious REDEEMER'S Love: Blessings, Which even in this life, in the Communication of the Peace of GOD within us, Surpass in their influence our utmost anticipation, and Which in the Life to Come will Fill the Angelic Host with admiring wonder.

When, further declining in the vale of years, Abraham was Destined to be separated from the Partner of his joys, the Wife of his bosom, from whose Favoured womb had issued forth That Seed, through which, in an Acceptable Season, all the Nations of the Earth were eventually to be Blest; on this occasion we see him feeling as a Man, and acting with respectful tenderness as a Husband; as is thus Recorded, "*And Sarah was an hundred and seven and twenty years old; these were the years of the life of Sarah: and Sarah died in Kirjath-arba; the same is Hebron in the Land of Canaan. And Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her: and Abraham stood up from before his Dead, and spake unto the Sons of Heth, saying, 'I am a Stranger and a Sojourner with you; give me a possession of a burying-place with you, that I may bury my Dead out of my sight!' And the Children of Heth answered Abraham, saying unto him, 'Hear us, my Lord! Thou art a mighty Prince among us; in the choice of our sepulchres bury thy Dead! None of us shall withhold from thee his sepulchre; but that thou mayest bury thy Dead.'*" And Abraham stood up, and bowed himself to the People of the Land, even to the Children of Heth, and he communed with them, saying, "*If it be your mind that I should bury my Dead out of my sight, hear me, and entreat for me to Ephron, the Son of Zohar, that he may give me the Cave of Mackpelah, which he hath, which is in the end of his Field! For—as much money as it is worth he shall give it me for a possession of a burying-place amongst you.'*" And Ephron dwelt among the Children of Heth; and Ephron, the Hittite, answered

*Abraham in the audience of the Children of Heth, even of All, that went in at the gate of his City, saying, 'Nay, my Lord, hear me! The Field give I thee, and the Cave that is therein; I give it thee; in the presence of the Sons of my People give I it thee; bury thy Dead!' And Abraham bowed down himself before the People of the Land; and he spake unto Ephron in the audience of the People of the Land, saying, 'But if thou wilt give it, I pray thee, hear me! I will give thee money for the Field; take it of me! and I will bury my Dead there.' And Ephron answered Abraham, saying unto him, 'My Lord, hearken unto me! The Land is worth four hundred shekels of silver: what is that betwixt me and thee? Bury therefore thy Dead!' And Abraham hearkened unto Ephron; and Abraham weighed to Ephron the silver, which he had named in the audience of the Sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, current money with the Merchant: and the Field of Ephron, which was in Machpelah, which was before Mamre, the Field, and the Cave which was therein, and all the trees that were in the Field, that were in all the borders round about, were made sure unto Abraham for a possession, in the presence of the Children of Heth, before All that went in at the gate of his City. And after this Abraham buried Sarah, his Wife, in the Cave of the Field of Machpelah, before Mamre."*—Gen. xxiii.

Thus testimony is borne to the honourable and discreet character and conduct of Abraham by the ready offer from the Inhabitants of a Land, in which he was only a Sojourner, of the choicest of their Sepulchres without money and without price, for the burial of his Dead; manifesting by facts, which speak less questionably than the tongues of praise (too often prompted by interest or flattery), the excellence of his own and his Family's demeanour and arrangements, though Aliens from the Commonwealth of All around them. "*And Abraham came to mourn for Sarah and to weep for her.*" The Resurrection of the Dead it is not probable that Abraham could call in question: he could not doubt that Sarah, though dead in the body, yet lived (as she still liveth) in the Spirit; and that they should Both meet their REDEEMER in the latter Day upon the Earth: but the obstruction of that stream of Conjugal endearment and felicity, which had so long and uninterruptedly flowed in upon him, could not but excite in his sensitive heart the feeling of manly sorrow, a sorrow which manifested itself by tears, bespeaking deep inward feeling, as arose to his mind the recollection of her virtues and faithfulness, and charms, when they journeyed the road of life together, interchanging sweet counsel as they walked humbly and confidently with their GOD; for now, that Partner of his bed and board, with the silver cord of life unstrung, silent and senseless, was no longer to be the cherished Companion of his own remnant of life, to soothe him amidst his cares and to solace him amidst his infirmities. Abraham, however, sorrowed as a Man, but not as One without religious and, doubtless, Christian hope, exemplifying that the natural grief of the heart on such a separation may, and should be associated with, and tempered by a devout and faith-sustaining disposition of the Soul. For an extravagant indulgence of grief is irreconcilable with true piety; and that to sorrow with an ungodly sorrow, by repining at The DIVINE Dispensations, is not the part of a wise and well-regulated mind; but on the contrary, to bow submissively to the Ordinances of our CREATOR is characteristic of that Faith, which in Spirit overcometh Death.

△ The next attractive and instructive feature in the character of Abraham was his Parental solicitude respecting the Conjugal union which his Son, Isaac, might form: a solicitude in a very high degree commendable and exemplary, since from a Connection so intimate and influential the most important consequences, as well Spiritual as temporal, so frequently ensue—not only as regards the peace and happiness of the Individuals engaged in it, but also of their Offspring and Dependents, perhaps from Generation to Generation. And as to a pious Mind

no greater affliction can arise, than to witness either profligacy or irreligion in the heart and habits of the Child of its affection, so cannot there be presented to the religious feelings of a fond Father or Mother a more enduring gratification than the conviction that Children, reared under their nurture and admonition, are treading the same Scripture-Guiding Paths, that Lead to Heavenly Communion and Holiness and Endless Joy. It is, therefore, obviously not less the dictate of Self-interest than a most sacred duty, by every reasonable means in our power, and by prayer for DIVINE Co-operation, to bring about those Alliances in All over whom we may use influence, which will produce an union of Souls in the love and service of The FATHER of Spirits. Abraham's proceeding in this respect is thus Recorded, "*And Abraham was old and well stricken in age; and The LORD had Blessed Abraham in all things. And Abraham said unto his eldest Serrant of his house, that ruled over all that he had, 'Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh, and I will make thee swear by The LORD, The GOD of Heaven, and The GOD of the Earth, that thou shalt not take a Wife unto my Son of the Daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell: but thou shalt go unto my Country and to my Kindred, and take a Wife unto my Son Isaac!'*" *And the Serrant said unto him 'Peradventure the Woman will not be willing to follow me unto this Land! Must I needs bring thy Son again unto the Land from whence thou camest?'*" *And Abraham said unto him, 'Beware thou, that thou bring not my Son thither again! THE LORD GOD of Heaven, Which Took me from my Father's house, and from the Land of my Kindred, and Which Spake unto me, and That Sware unto me, Saying, 'Unto thy Seed will I Give this Land!—He shall Send His Angel before thee; and thou shalt take a Wife unto my Son from thence. And if the Woman will not be willing to follow thee, then thou shalt be clear from this my oath: only bring not my Son thither again!'"*—Gen. xxiv, 1 to 8.

Though Distinguished in a pre-eminent degree by The DIVINE Favours with all the beneficial possessions that property could give, and doubly enriched by the enjoyment which a temperate and wise use and application of them were calculated to produce, "*for the Blessing of The LORD It Maketh Rich; and He Addeth no sorrow with It,*"—Prov. x, 22,—Abraham had yet one Blessing more to wish, and for the attainment of It he set himself to work in the manner he thought best adapted to gain The DIVINE Assistance, trusting in the general Guidance of his heart by The HOLY SPIRIT; and did not wait for a Specific Revelation of The ALMIGHTY'S Will, as Imparted in the Direction for the Offering up of Isaac as a Sacrifice. It is thus that our own judgments are to be called into action under the supplicated (though it may be silently supplicated) Governance of DIVINE Grace in all the ordinary and extraordinary occurrences and circumstances of our life and condition. Abraham thus adopted the means apparently best suited to the end, so far as the choice of them did not present any opposition to The DIVINE Appointment or Commands; and having so done, he piously left the result to PROVIDENCE. It is true he might have gone himself, and in Person have introduced his Son: and such, to a worldly mind, might have seemed the wiser course. But dear as was the fulfilment successfully of this Embassy to his heart, Abraham knew and felt that obedience to The DIVINE Revelation Made to him, by continuing in the Land of Promise, though then only treated as a Sojourner in it, was of far more vital importance to the Best Interests both of himself and his Son. Abraham's fear for the marriage of his Son with a Female of Canaan, arose from the possibility of his being led away by her to idolatry; and having an Offspring Aliens from the faith and Service of the True GOD—a fear than which there can none greater assail a pious Parent's breast, and against which, therefore, it most especially behoves that Parent to be fortified in the best manner, not only by example, but by precept, and not only



with prayer, but with provision and exertion. To Abraham the Still Small Voice of Inspiration had Declared the importance of The Doctrine. In subsequent Ages it was avowed to be Expressly The DIVINE Command Delivered to GOD'S Chosen People, the Seed of Abraham. To us the example of Abraham contains the admonition that we should not choose for our Sons Women who are Canaanites in spirit, but Such as are of The Spiritual Adoption of CHRIST (as in Spirit Children of Abraham,) being Regenerated by the Purifying and Sanctifying Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT, for then alone can it be justly hoped that the Blessing of Abraham may flow back in after Generations. The doubt, raised by Eliezar, of his having influence to bring the Woman he might select, from her home, her Connections, and her native Land, to resign herself to a Stranger in a Land that was strange, and to pledge herself to so sacred and continuous an engagement as wedlock; and his inquiry whether, if he could not prevail with her, he should fetch Isaac thither to intercede with her in Person, and not improbably to continue there for the sake of such an alliance, was perfectly natural and judicious. But Abraham's faith was not to be so committed; for we find him not only not postponing his determination on the subject, till the event should show if any such decision were called for, but in the most prompt and mandatory terms forbidding the act and course altogether, saying "*Beware thou, that thou bring not my Son thither again;*" and then he devoutly declares his confidence in GOD, as Favouring the enterprize, and Disposed to Crown it with success. Thus would it be well if all temptations to a departure from the Avowed or Implied Will and Direction of The ALMIGHTY, whether originating with our Fellow Mortal, or prompted by the Spirit of evil in our own hearts, were boldly and piously met, and resisted—no season for parley or deliberation allowed—then would the seductive influence shrink from us as darkness from light, and being thus strong in The LORD and in the Power of His Might, we should be more than Conquerors through CHRIST, Who Helpeth with The SPIRIT All, who so have faith to be Saved: for unto us, and every Individual Believer in CHRIST JESUS, as unto the Israelites of old, doth JEHOVAH in Mercy Declare, "*Behold, I Send An ANGEL before thee to Keep thee in the Way, and to Bring thee into the Place Which I have Prepared! Beware of Him, and obey His Voice: provoke Him not! For He will not Pardon your transgressions: for My Name is in Him. But if thou shalt indeed obey His Voice, and do All That I Speak, then I will be An ENEMY unto thine Enemies, and An ADVERSARY unto thine Adversaries.*"—Ex. xxiii, 20 to 22. In the application of Which Promise to ourselves we have only to read "the Heavenly," instead of "the Earthly," Canaan; the Inheritance of Spiritual for temporal Blessing; and the evil affections within us and the Powers of Darkness from without, for the Adversaries and Enemies which The LORD of Hosts will combat for us in The PERSON of The Great CAPTAIN of Salvation unto All who enrol themselves under His Banner.

△ The Continuance of the Narrative of Abraham's Embassy is as follows: "*And the Servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham, his Master, and sware to him concerning that matter. And the Servant took ten camels, of the camels of his Master, and departed (for all the goods of his Master were in his hand); and he arose and went to Mesopotamia, unto the City of Nahor: and he made his camels to kneel down without the City, by a well of water, at the time of the evening, even the time that Women go out to draw water: and he said, 'O LORD GOD of my Master Abraham, I pray Thee, Send me Good Speed this day; and Shew Kindness unto my Master, Abraham! Behold, I stand here by the well of water; and the Daughters of the Men of the City come out to draw water! And Let it come to pass that the Damsel, to whom I shall say, 'Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may*

*k! and She shall say, 'Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also!' Let Same be She, that Thou hast Appointed for Thy Servant, Isaac! And thereby I know that Thou hast Shewed Kindness unto my Master.' And it came to , before he had done speaking, that, behold, Rebekah came out, who was born to uel, Son of Milcah, the Wife of Nahor, Abraham's Brother, with her pitcher a her shoulder: and the Damsel was very fair to look upon; a Virgin; and She t down to the well, and filled her pitcher, and came up: and the Servant ran to t her, and said, 'Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher!' And said, 'Drink, my Lord!' and She hastened, and let down her pitcher upon her d, and gave him drink: and when She had done giving him drink, She said, 'I draw water for thy camels also, until they have done drinking:' and She hastened emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran again unto the well to draw water, drew for all his camels. And the Man, wondering at her, held his peace, to whether The LORD had Made his journey prosperous, or not? And it came to , as the camels had done drinking, that the Man took a golden earring of half a el weight, and two bracelets for her hands of ten shekels weight of gold, and said, hose Daughter art thou? tell me, I pray thee? Is there room in thy Father's se for us to lodge in? And She said unto him, 'I am the Daughter of Bethuel, Son of Milcah, which She bare unto Nahor.' She said moreover unto him, 'We e both straw and provender enough, and room to lodge in.' And the Man ed down his head, and worshipped The LORD; and he said, 'Blessed be The RD GOD of my Master Abraham, Who hath not Left destitute my Master of Mercy and His Truth! I being in the way, The LORD Led me to the house ny Master's Brethren.' And the Damsel ran and told them of her Mother's se these things. And Rebekah had a Brother, and his name was Laban; and an ran out unto the Man, unto the well: and it came to pass, when he saw the ing, and bracelets upon his Sister's hands, and when he heard the words of ekah, his Sister, saying, 'Thus spake the Man unto me,' that he came unto the n; and, behold, he stood by the camels at the well: and he said, 'Come in, thou sed of The LORD! wherefore standest thou without? for I have prepared the se, and room for the camels.' And the Man came into the house, and he ungirded camels, and gave straw and provender for the camels, and water to wash his feet the Men's feet that were with him; and there was set meat before him to eat. he said, 'I will not eat, until I have told my errand.' And he said, 'Speak on!' i he said, 'I am Abraham's Servant; and The LORD hath Blessed my Master utly; and he is become great; and He hath Given him flocks, and herds, and r and gold, and Men Servants, and Maid Servants, and camels and asses. i Sarah, my Master's Wife, bare a Son to my Master, when she was old: and o him hath he given all that he hath. And my Master made me swear, saying,-- u shalt not take a Wife to my Son of the Daughters of the Canaanites, in whose id I dwell; but thou shalt go unto my Father's House and to my Kindred, and a Wife unto my Son.--And I said,--Peradventure the Woman will not follow '!--And he said unto me,--THE LORD, before Whom I walk, will Send His el with thee, and Prosper thy way; and thou shalt take a Wife for my Son of Kindred and of my Father's House: then shalt thou be clear from this my oath.-- i I came this day unto the well, and said,--O LORD GOD of my Master akam, if now Thou do Prosper my way which I go; behold, I stand by the well ater; and it shall come to pass, that when the Virgin cometh forth to draw r, and I say to her,--Give me, I pray thee, a little water of thy pitcher to drink!-- she say to me,--Both drink thou, and I will also draw for thy camels!--Let the e be the Woman, whom The LORD hath Appointed out for my Master's Son, before I had done speaking in mine heart, behold, Rebekah came forth with her er on her shoulder; and she went down unto the well and drew water; and I*

said unto her,--*'Let me drink, I pray thee !'* And She made haste, and let down her pitcher from her shoulder, and said,--*'Drink ! and I will give thy camels drink also.'* So I drank, and She made the camels drink also : and I asked her, and said,--*'Whose Daughter art thou ?'* And She said,--*'The Daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's Son, whom Milcah bare unto him.'* And I put the earring upon her face and the bracelets upon her hands : and I bowed down my head and worshipped The LORD, and blessed The LORD GOD of my Master Abraham, Which had Led me in the right way, to take my Master's Brother's Daughter unto his Son. And now if ye will deal kindly and truly with my Master, tell me ! and if not, tell me ! that I may turn to the right hand or to the left.' Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, 'The Thing Proceedeth from The LORD ! we cannot speak unto thee bad or good : behold, Rebekah is before thee, take her, and go ; and let her be thy Master's Son's Wife ! as The LORD hath Spoken.' And it came to pass that when Abraham's Servant heard their words, he worshipped The LORD ; bowing himself to the earth. And the Servant brought forth jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment, and gave them to Rebekah : he gave also to her Brother and to her Mother precious things : and they did eat and drink, he and the men that were with him ; and tarried all night : and they rose up in the morning, and he said, 'Send me away unto my Master !' And her Brother and her Mother said, 'Let the Damsel abide with us a few days, at the least ten ! after that She shall go.' And he said unto them, 'Hinder me not ! seeing The LORD hath Prospered my way : send me away ! that I may go to my Master.' And they said, 'We will call the Damsel, and inquire at her mouth.' And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, 'Wilt thou go with this Man ?' and She said, 'I will go.' And they sent away Rebekah, their Sister, and her Nurse, and Abraham's Servant and his Men. And they blessed Rebekah, and said unto her, 'Thou art our Sister ; be thou the Mother of Thousands of Millions ; and let thy Seed possess the gate of Those, that hate them !' And Rebekah arose, and her Damsels ; and they rode upon the camels, and followed the Man ; and the Servant took Rebekah and went his way. And Isaac came from the way of the well Lahai-roi ; for he dwelt in the South Country ; and Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the even-tide ; and he lifted up his eyes and saw, and behold, the camels were coming. And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when She saw Isaac, She lighted off the camel ; for She had said unto the Servant, 'What Man is this, that walketh in the field to meet us ?' And the Servant had said, 'It is my Master :' therefore She took a veil and covered herself. And the Servant told Isaac all things that he had done. And Isaac brought her into his Mother Sarah's tent ; and took Rebekah, and She became his Wife ; and he loved her. And Isaac was comforted after his Mother's death."—Gen. xxiv, 9 to 67. How full of interest and instruction is this Family Incident ? Abraham's faith evidently descended to his Steward, the first Officer of his Household ; every arrangement for the journey was made in consistency with a truthful effort towards attaining the object, though that object, if attained, might additionally tend to interrupt even the remote probability of his eventually succeeding to Abraham's property, extensive as it was, in case of Isaac's dying Childless in Abraham's lifetime, or if Isaac had married among the Daughters of Canaan to the discomfiture of his Father, and the possible disinheritance of himself as a consequence of his thereby opposing the Gracious Purpose of JEHOVAH. The supplication for DIVINE Assistance and Guidance to be thrown in the way of the very Maiden, to whom it would be in the Will of The ALMIGHTY that Isaac should be allied, for the furtherance of his own happiness and the fulfilment of his Father's pious purpose, instead of at once resting on his own judgment and discrimination, by at once introducing himself amongst all the People of the City, is another commendable feature in this wise-hearted Servant, a course so simple in its suggestion, and so calculated to develope character in

he Female; and the Direct Answer to the prayer is an obvious Proof of A Particular PROVIDENCE, Which it would be well if we all individually so sought, and so confided in. The right-minded Rebekah, full of one of the leading and endearing qualities of her Sex, a readiness to oblige, and an active spirit of attention to the wants and reasonable wishes of Others, not only met the direct solicitation of the Steward in giving him of the water she had drawn, but instantly of her free will extended her service, and doubtless, not without much Personal exertion, drew successively till she had filled and, perhaps, refilled the trough with a supply that satisfied the thirst of no less than eight camels after a wearying journey; an animal peculiarly copious in its draughts, from the enlarged formation of its stomach, to enable it to sustain its progress through the thirsty deserts. The renewed piety of the Steward at finding his hope thus PROVIDENTIALLY Seconded, shows the vital Hold that Abraham's GOD had upon his heart. We find, also, that though Abraham had left, and long left, the Land of his Kindred, the knowledge and worship of The True GOD had not forsaken it with him, for both Laban and Bethuel manifested the Patriarchal faith, in saying to the Steward, "*The Thing Proceedeth from The LORD! We cannot speak unto thee bad or good:*" they probably meant that they would not, by any other decision of their own than entire resignation to The Divine Will, interrupt the Course so Graciously Pointed out to the Steward; and, therefore, they put such guard over their tongues, though of words seemingly and intentionally good, lest the views of the Steward might be changed, and his search for a Wife for his young Master be elsewhere directed. Their after proposal that Rebekah might have some ten days allowed her to prepare for her departure, and that her Kindred's minds might by degrees become reconciled to such a separation from her, appears quite consistent and reasonable after the consent given to the betrothment—and their ultimately yielding to Rebekah's decision, proved their determination to render their natural feelings subordinate to their religious impressions. The parting Blessing they invoked from The FOUNTAIN of All Good on Rebekah, was in accordance with the Prophetic Destiny of the Husband of her choice.

The short description of the courtship and marriage, under the peculiar circumstances and habits of the Age and Place, and the expression of Isaac's warmth of feeling under his new Relationship, leave to the imagination the easy task to supply the picture of mutual endearment interchanged between the Objects of an Union so evidently Superinduced and Countenanced by GOD, Whose faith they mutually cherished, and Whose willing Servants they gratefully proved. In such a consummation of the fondest wish of a pious Parent's heart, what joy must that Union, in its prospects, as well as present appearance, have imparted to Abraham; and in the piety as well as the fidelity of his Steward, and probably in the influential acknowledgment and worship of The True GOD by the Members of his Household generally, what reflective delight must the Soul of the Patriarch have received under the consciousness that his own piety had tended to Bring down Such Accumulated Blessings upon him. May we so live and so act, Each in our peculiar circumstance and Connections, as that we may taste of such reflective and prospective happiness under a sense of The DIVINE Favour, by a sacred regard to The DIVINE Will, that both we and our Household may serve The LORD.

In continuance of Abraham's History it is Declared, that "*Then again Abraham took a Wife, and her name was Keturah:*"—Gen. xxv, 1. (by whom he had six Children). "*And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac: but unto the Sons of the Concubines, which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts; and sent them away from Isaac, his Son, while he yet lived, eastward, unto the East Country.*"—

Gen. xxv, 5, 6. Assured by DIVINE Revelation that Isaac was the Child, who was the Elect of GOD, and in whose SEED all the Families of the Earth were to be Blest, Abraham invested him in a pre-eminent degree with his Substance, that he might the more readily establish a Name upon Earth and become the Founder of that Nation, which was to Spring from his loins. And probably to prevent the influence of jealousy and envy, Abraham dismissed the Others of his Offspring into a distant Land, giving them a provision sufficient for their wants; yet not enough to arm them with power against Isaac.

In conclusion of this interesting and important History of the Founder of the Faithful it is Said, "*And these are the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, an hundred three score and fifteen years. Then Abraham gave up the Ghost, and died in a good old age, an old Man, and full of years; and was gathered to his People. And his Sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the Cave of Mackpelah.*"—Gen. xxv, 7 to 9. The years of Man are now ordinarily a century short of those Allotted to Abraham; but ample time, in the contracted span of this our Generation, is Afforded to every One to work out the Great Work of Salvation through faith in CHRIST JESUS; and though a Man be of a good old age and full of years at the end of three score years and ten (at which age Abraham is only introduced Historically to our notice, beyond the mere mention of his birth and marriage), yet may the Everlasting Inheritance of the Heavenly Canaan and the possession of the Joys Thereof, Which are immeasurably more than the heart can conceive, be ours, if the time Allotted us, after Abraham's example, be employed in obedience to the Word, and in Submission to The SPIRIT of GOD—and then will our latter end be like Abraham's, full of Consolation in the confidence of Redemption and Sanctification through JESUS CHRIST, The SEED of Eternal Blessedness to all faithful Believers.

The meeting of the Brothers, Isaac and Ishmael, to perform the last office of reverence to their venerable and venerated Parent, is alike creditable to Both.

△ The Testimony Borne in other parts of Scripture, including as well the New as the Old Testament, to the character and merit of Abraham, is extensive, and may be profitably consulted. In the Renewed Promise of Blessedness to Isaac, "*That in his SEED should all the Nations of the Earth be Blessed,*" The ALMIGHTY Expressly Thus Assigns, as the Reason for Such Pre-eminent Distinction, "*Because that Abraham obeyed My Voice, and kept My Charge, My Commandments, My Statutes, and My Laws.*"—Gen. xxvi, 5. And again, on The LORD'S Appearance to Isaac, He Said, "*I Am The GOD of Abraham, thy Father, fear not! For I Am with thee, and will Bless thee, and Multiply thy Seed, for My Servant Abraham's sake.*"—ib. 24. In the dying benediction of Isaac to his Son Jacob, when manifesting a Parental care and discretion in the choice for him of a Wife from amongst his Mother's Kindred, he said, "*May GOD ALMIGHTY Bless thee, and Make thee Fruitful, and Multiply thee, that thou mayest be a Multitude of People; and Give thee the Blessing of Abraham, to thee and to thy Seed with thee!*"—Gen. xxviii, 3 and 4. Isaac thereby manifesting the most Filial reverence and ingenuousness towards the memory of his Father Abraham by thus passing over, without even any mention of It, the Blessing Promised to himself; and referring, with equal humility and justice, to him from whose merits had originated the Pledge of Such Gracious Promises.—When the Anger of The LORD was Kindled against Israel for their idolatry, whilst Moses was separated from them in Mount Sinai, one of the reasons urged by Moses for appeasing The DIVINE Displeasure and averting the Threatened Judgment of Universal Destruction, was the merit of Abraham in his faithfulness, and The Promises Made to him and his immediate Issue, thus recalling them, as it were, to The ALMIGHTY'S Thoughts, "*O LORD GOD, Remember Abraham, Isaac,*

and Jacob, Thy Servants, to whom Thou Swarest by Thine Own Self, and Saidest unto them, *“I will Multiply your Seed as the Stars of Heaven; and all this Land, that I have Spoken of, will I Give unto your Seed, and they shall inherit it for ever.”*—Ex. xxxii, 11, 13, 14.—Deut. ix, 26, 27. When the terrors of an invading Enemy had seized the Inhabitants of Judah, their King Jehoshaphat, in his admirable prayer, which he publicly offered up on the occasion for The ALMIGHTY'S Succour, impressively asks, when addressing Him as The LORD GOD of their Fathers, *“Art not Thou our GOD, Who didst Drive out the Inhabitants of this Land before Thy People Israel, and Gavest it to the Seed of Abraham, Thy Friend, for ever?”*—2 Chron. xx, 7. And can a more distinguishing mark of exalted worth be found in Such a Designation? and with how much justice, since it is Established by GOD'S Own Adoption of the very Term, when, Expostulating by His Prophet with the People of Israel, He thus Addresses them as *“the Seed of Abraham, My Friend!”*—Is. xli, 8. To the same effect was the general acknowledgment of the Israelites on the celebration of the Fast after their Release from the Babylonish captivity, *“THOU, LORD GOD, hast Made Heaven, the Heaven of Heavens, with all their Host, the Earth and All Things That are therein, the Seas and All that is therein; and Thou Preservest them All; and the Host of Heaven worshippeth Thee! Thou art The LORD, The GOD, Who didst Choose Abram, and Broughtest him forth out of Ur of the Chaldees, and Gavest him the name of Abraham; and Foundest his heart faithful before Thee, and Madest a Covenant with him.”*—Nehem. ix, 6 to 8. Even David himself addressed The DIVINE BEING as *“The GOD of Abraham.”*—Ps. xlvii, 9. In the New Testament the Same Chain of reverential respect for the piety and virtue of Abraham and his exemplary obedience is continued. The Holy JESUS Adverts to the Saying of GOD Himself in the 3rd ch. of Exodus, ver. 6 and 16, *“I Am The GOD of Abraham, and The GOD of Isaac, and The GOD of Jacob,”* and Urges it as an Evidence of our Spiritual Existence after the death of the body, Saying, *“GOD is not The GOD of the Dead, but of the Living.”*—Matt. xxii, 32; and, when Exhorting Others to repentance, Points to Abraham's Spirit as assuredly within the Pale of Salvation; from Which the Faithless will be excluded, Saying of and to the Latter, *“There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the Prophets in the KINGDOM of GOD, and you yourselves thrust out.”*—Luke xiii, 28. The Same Infallible ORACLE Declared that Salvation had Come unto the House of the Publican Zaccheus *“forsomuch as he also was a Son of Abraham.”*—Luke xix, 9; Meaning, doubtless, not because he was a Descendant from Abraham; but because he was like him, not faithless but believing: as on another Occasion is explained beyond misunderstanding, where Some of the Jews, priding themselves upon being descended, according to the flesh, from Abraham, and therefore of his Seed, JESUS thus Exposed the fallacy of such dependence, *“If ye were Abraham's Children, ye would do the works of Abraham.”*—John viii, 39. That Abraham was in spirit and in truth a Christian we have also the Assurance of CHRIST Himself; for when Accusing the unbelieving Jews, who boasted that they were the Seed of Abraham, though seeking to kill JESUS, He thus Spake, *“This did not Abraham, for he rejoiced to see My Day, and he saw it and was glad.”*—John viii, 40, 56. St. Peter, in his Sermon at Jerusalem, which was the occasion of so comprehensive a Conversion amongst his Hearers, when preaching JESUS, from the Practical Text Illustrative of His Power through the Virtue of His Name, on the Restoration of the lame Man to the free use of his feet, addresses them as *“the Children of the Prophets,”* adding, *“and of the Covenant Which God (Whom he elsewhere expressly calls The GOD of Abraham) Made*

with our Fathers, Saying Unto Abraham, 'And in thy SEED shall all the Kindreds of the Earth be Blessed:—' and unto JESUS, the Apostle, points as Fulfilling That Promise.—Acts iii, 25. 13, &c. St. Stephen, in the Discourse, which immediately preceded his martyrdom, enters into a brief narrative of the Grand Events in the Jewish History, as admitted by All, and dwells on the Promise Which GOD (Who St. Stephen affirms, Himself Declared to Moses on Mount Sinai, that He was The GOD of Abraham) had Sworn to Abraham.—Acts vii, 17. 31, 32. St. Paul too, in the Sermon he Preached at Antioch, addressed his Audience as "*Children of the Stock of Abraham, to whom the Word of Salvation by JESUS CHRIST was Sent.*"—Acts xiii, 26. This latter Apostle, in his Dissertation on the comparative efficacy of faith and works (as differently estimated by Such as had not Spiritual discernment; for to the truly Spiritualized mind they are as inseparable as cause and effect), enters into an examination of the religious qualities of Abraham, not only confirming by the result the Truth of the Scriptural Delineation of them, but removing some dangerous misconceptions which had been formed with reference to the principle of the supposed sufficiency of Self-righteousness for Salvation, and holding it up to view in its misleading colours; for after insisting, in the most solemn manner, that by a right faith in The Incarnate SON of GOD, The PATTERN of All Excellence, is the Law of good works and obedience unto Holiness Established, he refers at once to Abraham, the acknowledged Father of the Faithful, as an Authority for such Position and so All-Important Doctrine, prefacing his remarks with the force of interrogation; "*What shall we say then that Abraham, our Father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? For if Abraham were Justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before GOD. For What Saith the Scripture?—(Gen. xv, 6.) 'Abraham believed GOD; and it was Counted unto him for Righteousness.'* How was it then Reckoned? when he was in Circumcision, or in Uncircumcision? Not in Circumcision, but in Uncircumcision: and he received the Sign of Circumcision, a Seal of the Righteousness of the Faith which he had, yet being uncircumcised, that he might be the Father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that Righteousness might be Imputed unto them also; and the Father of Circumcision to them who are not of the Circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that Faith of our Father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised: for The Promise, that he should be the Heir of the World, was not to Abraham or to his Seed through the Law, but through the Righteousness of Faith. For if they, which are of the Law, be Heirs, Faith is made void; and The Promise made of none effect: because the Law worketh wrath: for where no Law is, there is no transgression. Therefore, it is of Faith, that it might be by Grace; to the end The Promise might be Sure to All the Seed: not to That only which is of the Law, but to That also which is of the Faith of Abraham, who is the Father of us all (as it is Written, Gen. xvii, 5, 'I have made thee a Father of many Nations'), before Him Whom he believed, even GOD, Who Quickeneth the Dead; and Calleth those Things which be not as though they were,—referring to Abraham,—who, against hope, believed in hope, that he might become the Father of many Nations, according to That Which was Spoken (Gen. xv, 5, in allusion to the Stars), 'So shall thy Seed be.' And being not weak in Faith, he considered not his own body, now dead, when he was about an hundred years old; neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: he staggered not at The Promise of GOD through unbelief, but was strong in faith; giving Glory to GOD; and being fully persuaded that What He had Promised, He was Able also to Perform; and therefore, it was Imputed to Him for Righteousness." From all which exposition and reasoning, the Apostle draws this conclusion, which is alike consolatory to Gentile and to Jew.—"*Now It was not Written for his sake alone, that It was Imputed to him, but for us also, to whom It shall be Imputed, if we*

believe on Him That Raised up JESUS, our LORD, from the Dead; Who was Delivered for our offences, and was Raised again for our Justification."—Rom. iv, 1 to 3. 9 to 25. In his Epistle to the Galatian Converts, when reasoning with them on the folly and falsity of resting exclusively their hope on an assumed observance of the Law, without admitting the necessity of Faith, he says, with peculiar energy of expression, "*O foolish Galatians! who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the Truth? Before whose eyes JESUS CHRIST hath been Evidently Set forth, Crucified among you. This only would I learn of you, Received ye The SPIRIT by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of Faith? Are ye so foolish? Having begun in The SPIRIT, are ye now made Perfect in the Flesh? Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain. He, therefore, that ministereth to you The SPIRIT, and worketh Miracles among you, doth he it by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of Faith?—Even as Abraham believed GOD; and it was Accounted to him for Righteousness.*" And the Apostle then goes on in illustration of the comprehensive and beneficial Effects of Faith in CHRIST, and of the Promise Founded on Abraham's illustrious Exemplification of it, to say, "*Know, therefore, that They, which are of Faith, the Same are the Children of Abraham: and the Scriptures, Foreseeing that GOD would Justify the Heathen through Faith, Preached before The Gospel unto Abraham, Saying, 'In thee shall all Nations be Blessed.'*" So then, *They, which be of Faith, are Blessed with faithful Abraham.*" St. Paul, afterwards, thus exposes the danger of a reliance on the Law, or works without faith, "*For as Many as are of the works of the Law, are under the Curse, for it is Written (Deut. xxvii, 26), 'Cursed is every One, that continueth not in all Things, which are Written in the Book of the Law, to do them.' But that no Man is Justified by the Law in the Sight of GOD it is evident, for 'the Just shall live by Faith'—Habakk. ii, 4; and the Law is not of Faith; but the Man, that doeth them, shall live in them.*"—Levit. xviii, 5. The Apostle thence proceeds to show the Efficacy of That Mediation, Which, if faithfully accepted, Cleanseth from all unrighteousness, and Qualifieth for the becoming Heirs of Immortal Glory in The KINGDOM to Come, "*CHRIST hath Redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, being Made a Curse for us; for it is Written (Deut. xxi, 23), 'Cursed is every One that hangeth on a tree; that the Blessing of Abraham might Come on the Gentiles through JESUS CHRIST; that we might receive the Promise of The SPIRIT through Faith.'*" And in further confirmation of the Apostle's belief in JESUS CHRIST, as That Blessing upon all Nations Which was to be Exemplified in Him, The Appointed SEED of Abraham according to the Flesh, St. Paul adapts his reasoning to their understandings who had not yielded implicitly to such Doctrine of Faith; but whom, nevertheless, in the zeal of Christian charity, he wished to bring within the Pale of Salvation, "*Brethren! I speak after the manner of Men; Though it be but a Man's covenant; yet, if it be confirmed, no Man disannulleth, or addeth thereto. Now to Abraham and his SEED were The Promises Made. He Saith not, 'And to Seeds,' as of many, but of ONE, 'And to thy SEED, Which is CHRIST.'*" And this I say, that *The Covenant That was Confirmed before of GOD in CHRIST, the Law, Which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the Promise of none effect. For if the Inheritance be of the Law, it is no more of Promise. But GOD Gave It to Abraham by Promise.*" The Apostle then anticipates the very question, that would have arisen in the minds of his doubting and disputing Correspondents: "*Wherefore then Serveth the Law? It was Added (he says) because of transgressions, till The SEED should Come to Whom the Promise was Made: and It was Ordained by Angels in the Hand of A MEDIATOR. Now a Mediator is not a Mediator of One; but GOD is ONE. Is the Law then against The Promises of GOD? GOD Forbid! For if there had been a Law Given, Which*



could have Given Life, verily Righteousness should have been by the Law. But the Scripture hath Concluded All under sin, that The Promise by Faith of JESUS CHRIST might be Given to Them that believe. But before Faith Came, we were kept under the Law, Shut up unto the Faith Which should afterwards be Revealed. Wherefore the Law was our School-Master to Bring us unto CHRIST, that we might be Justified by Faith. But after that Faith is Come, we are no longer under a School-Master." And then to the unspeakable consolation of All that have vital Faith to be Saved, he adds, "For ye are All the Children of GOD by Faith in CHRIST JESUS: for as Many of you as have been Baptized into CHRIST, have put on CHRIST. There is neither Jew, nor Greek; there is neither Bond, nor Free; there is neither Male nor Female; but ye are All One in CHRIST JESUS: and if ye be CHRIST'S, then are ye Abraham's Seed, and Heirs according to The Promise."—Gal. iii. The Apostle then proceeds in the same vigorous train of reasoning and deduction by analogy from the History of Abraham, and the Advent of the Promised Blessedness through his SEED, CHRIST JESUS:—"Now I say, That the Heir, as long as he is a Child, differeth nothing from a Servant, though he be Lord of all; but is under Tutors and Governors, until the time appointed of the Father. Even so we, when we were Children, were in bondage under the elements of the World: but when the Fulness of the Time was Come, GOD Sent forth His SON, Made of a Woman, Made under the Law, to Redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the Adoption of Sons. And, because ye are Sons, GOD hath Sent forth The SPIRIT of His SON into your hearts crying, ABBA! FATHER! Wherefore thou art no more a Servant, but a Son; and, if a Son, then an Heir of GOD through CHRIST. Tell me, ye that desire to be under the Law, do ye not hear the Law? For it is Written (Gen. xiv, 15., xxi, 1 to 3), that Abraham had two Sons, the One by a Bond-Maid, the Other by a Free-Woman: but he, who was of the Bond-Woman, was born after the Flesh; but he of the Free-Woman was by Promise, Which Things are an allegory, for These are the Two Covenants; the One from Mount Sinai, Which Gendereth to bondage, which is Agar: for this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her Children. But Jerusalem, Which is Above, is Free, Which is the Mother of us all. For it is Written (Is. liv, 1), 'Rejoice thou Barren, that bearest not! break forth, and cry, thou that travailest not! for the Desolate hath many more Children than She which hath an Husband.' Now we, Brethren, as Isaac was, are the Children of Promise. But as then, he that was born after the Flesh, persecuted him that was born after The SPIRIT, even so it is now. Nevertheless, What Saith The Scripture? (Gen. xxi, 10. 12.) 'Cast out the Bond-Woman and her Son! For the Son of the Bond-Woman shall not be Heir with the Son of the Free-Woman.' So then, Brethren, we are not Children of the Bond-Woman, but of the Free."—Gal. iv, 1 to 7., 21 to 31. That The Covenant, Entered into by JEHOVAH with Abraham, (of the acceptance of Which on the part of Abraham and his Descendants Circumcision was the Seal and Testimony), was Fulfilled by the Advent of The LORD'S CHRIST, when a New Feature of Adoption, even The SPIRITUAL Circumcision of the Soul was Appointed in Substitution for that of the Body, the Apostle, in the concluding chapters of the same Epistle, seeks to show; pointing out, in a manner the most clear and impressive, the mode by which All of us should in Spirit and in truth, and in that Faith which worketh by love, adopt The New Covenant with our GOD through CHRIST'S Mediation. This part of his Address he commences with an exhortation to firmness in adhering to That Solely-Saving and Vital Faith: "Stand fast, therefore, in the Liberty Wherewith CHRIST hath Made us Free! And be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage!" And then, in order to deter the new Converts to Christianity from surrendering to the repudiated Sign of bodily

Circumcision, to the exclusion of That Which was the Seal of The New Covenant in CHRIST JESUS, and of Which the Former was but the Type, he adds, with peculiar emphasis, "*Behold, I, Paul, say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, (referring, doubtless, to Those who, whether actually circumcised or preparing to be so, relied on the efficacy of that sacrifice, and not on That of Which Faith in CHRIST was the Sign), CHRIST shall Profit you nothing ; for I testify again to every Man that is circumcised, that he is Debtor to do the whole Law : CHRIST is Become of no Effect unto you, Whosoever of you are Justified by the Law ; ye are fallen from Grace !*" But then, not to give rise to the erroneous idea that a profession of Faith could Save, without our sincere adoption of It and Its Fruits, which are repentance and obedience unto Holiness, he writes, "*For we, through The SPIRIT, wait for the hope of Righteousness by Faith : for in JESUS CHRIST neither Circumcision availeth anything, nor Uncircumcision, but Faith which worketh by love.*"—Gal. v, 1 to 6. So also, in his Epistle to the Ephesians, St. Paul saith, "*We are GOD'S Workmanship, Created in CHRIST JESUS unto good works, which GOD hath before Ordained that we should walk in them !*" And then the Apostle shows the Glorious Privileges that belong and are Assured to Such as have faith in CHRIST : "*Wherefore (adds he) remember, that ye were in time past Gentiles in the Flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the Flesh made by hands ; that at that time ye were without CHRIST, being Aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel, and Strangers from the Covenants of Promise ; having no hope, and without GOD in the World. But now in CHRIST JESUS ye, who sometimes were far off, are Made Nigh by the Blood of CHRIST. Now, therefore, ye are no more Strangers and Foreigners, but Fellow-Citizens with the Saints, and of the Household of GOD ; and are Built upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, JESUS CHRIST Himself Being The Chief Corner Stone ; in Whom All the Building, Fitly Framed Together, Groweth unto An Holy Temple in The LORD : in Whom ye also are Built together for An Habitation of GOD through The SPIRIT.*"—Eph. ii, 10 to 13., 19 to 22. In the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Writer (supposed to be St. Paul) designates The DIVINE NATURE of JESUS CHRIST, by an express assertion of His having Himself Elected to be That SEED of Abraham, from Which The Promised Blessedness unto all Nations was to Flow, saying, "*Verily He Took not on Him the Nature of Angels ; but He Took on Him the Seed of Abraham.*"—ii, 16.

## REFLECTIONS ON DAVID'S HISTORY.

△ Having taken a view of the character and influence of Abraham, we proceed to look into the not less importantly profitable one of David, thus so Eminently Distinguished as the Stem, equally with Abraham as the Root, from which The BRANCH, That Bears the Soul's most Nutricious and Delicious FRUIT is Gathered by Believers in The Incarnation of The SON of GOD for Man's Salvation. For David, who was "*the Man after GOD'S Own Heart*," as well in the sincerity of his repentance for sin, as in his piety and general devotedness to the Will and Cause of GOD, may be unto us a valuable Example, and emulate us to be, as professing to be Servants, and hoping to be Children of The MOST HIGH, *perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works*, through the supplicated Aid of The HOLY SPIRIT.—2 Tim. iii, 16, 17.

MATT. i, 1.—"The Book of the Generation of JESUS CHRIST, The SON of David, The SON of Abraham."

The Scriptural History of David opens with Samuel's anointing him as King, on the defection of Saul from The DIVINE Commandment: It is taken from the xvi ch. of the 1st Book of Samuel.—"*And The LORD Said unto Samuel, 'How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have Rejected him from reigning over Israel? Fill thine horn with oil, and go! I will Send thee to Jesse, the Beth-lehemite; for I have Provided Me a King among his Sons.'* And Samuel said, '*How can I go? If Saul hear me, he will kill me!*' And The LORD Said, '*Take an heifer with thee, and say,—I am come to sacrifice to The LORD;—and call Jesse to the Sacrifice! And I will Shew thee what thou shalt do; and thou shalt Anoint unto Me him whom I Name unto thee!*' And Samuel did That Which The LORD Spake; and came to Beth-lehem; and the Elders of the Town trembled at his coming, and said '*Comest thou peaceably?*' And he said, '*Peaceably: I am come to sacrifice unto The LORD: Sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the Sacrifice!*' And he sanctified Jesse and his Sons; and called them to the Sacrifice. And it came to pass, when they were come, that he looked on Eliab, and said, '*Surely The LORD'S Anointed is before Him!*' But The LORD Said unto Samuel, '*Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature! Because I have Refused him; for The LORD Seeth not as Man seeth: for Man looketh on the outward appearance; but The LORD Looketh on the heart.*' Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, '*Neither hath The LORD Chosen this!*' Then Jesse made Shammah to pass by; And he said, '*Neither hath The LORD Chosen this!*' Again, Jesse made Seven of his Sons to pass before Samuel. And Samuel said unto Jesse, '*The LORD hath not Chosen these.*' And Samuel said unto Jesse, '*Are here all thy Children?*' And he said, '*There remaineth yet the Youngest; and, behold, he keepeth the sheep.*' And Samuel said unto Jesse, '*Send and fetch him! for we will not sit down till he come hither.*' And he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ruddy and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And The LORD Said, '*Arise, Anoint him! For this is he.*' Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and Anointed him in the midst of his Brethren: and The SPIRIT of The LORD Came upon David from that day forward."—1 Sam. xiii, 1 to 13. THE ALMIGHTY had Previously Declared His High Estimation of David, and his worthiness, notwith-

tanding the humbleness of his occupation as a Shepherd, to be King over The Chosen People of Israel; having, in the Denunciation of The DIVINE Displeasure against Saul, through the mouth of the Prophet Samuel, thus Foretold David's Election.—“*The LORD hath Sought Him a Man after His Own Heart, and The LORD hath Commanded him to be Captain over His People.*”—1 Sam. xiii, 14. That David was the Person here Alluded to, we have the double testimony of Jew and Christian, for the Jewish History establishes David to have been the immediate Successor of Saul on the Throne: and St. Luke, in his Account of the Acts of the Apostles, relates St. Paul to have thus preached before the Jews at Antioch in reference to the same event, saying, “*Men of Israel, and ye that fear GOD, give audience! THE GOD of this People of Israel Chose our Fathers: and Exalted the People, when they dwelt as Strangers in the Land of Egypt; and with an High Arm Brought He them out of it; and about the time of forty years Suffered He their manners in the Wilderness. And, when He had Destroyed Seven Nations in the Land of Canaan, He Divided their Land to them by lot. And after that, He Gave unto them Judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the Prophet. And afterward they desired a King: and GOD Gave unto them Saul, the Son of Cis, a Man of the Tribe of Benjamin, by the space of forty years: And when He had Removed him, He Raised up unto them David to be their King: to whom also He Gave Testimony, and Said, ‘I have Found David, the Son of Jesse, a Man after Mine Own Heart, which shall fulfil All My Will.’*” The Apostle then goes on to confirm the Connection of this with the History of JESUS CHRIST, saying, “*Of this Man's Seed hath GOD, According to His Promise, Raised unto Israel A SAVIOUR, JESUS; when John had first Preached, before His Coming, the Baptism of Repentance.*”—Acts xiii, 16 to 24.

The Discrimination of The DIVINE MIND is the Effect of Its Omniscience: to That the Future, the Present, and the Past are Alike. And as it is the Spirit of Man that knoweth what is in Man, so The SPIRIT of GOD, Which is Mightier, Alone Knoweth of what that Spirit in Man is formed; and though to Man That DIVINE SPIRIT be Invisible, or but dimly seen by the eye of Faith, yet doth It Penetrate the inmost recesses of the Human Soul, and is Fully Acquainted with all the imaginations of the thoughts of Men's hearts, even ere they are formed. In the selection of a Successor to Saul, a Prophet was mistaken, for on Eliab, the First-born of Jesse, being presented to him, he said “*Surely The LORD'S Anointed is before Him!*” the loftiness of his figure and the probable nobleness of his mien, added to his primogeniture, had, in Human eyes, rendered him apparently most deserving of the dignity that was to be conferred on One of his Father's Sons; but the pride and naughtiness of his heart (though as will afterwards appear, himself accusing David of those failings), his jealousy of merit, though possessed by his own Brother, and his confidence in the arm of Flesh, instead of a prayerful dependence on the Power and Protection of GOD, unfitted him for being The Chosen Servant of The LORD: and That Omniscient BEING, All Whose Judgments are Righteous, Said unto Samuel, “*Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature, because I have Refused him. For The LORD Seeth not as Man seeth; for Man looketh on the outward appearance: but The LORD Looketh upon the heart!*” How Great a Truth is here Revealed; and how Acceptable a Guide should It prove to us in the journey through life! Others of our Fellow-Creatures, though honoured even with the appellation of Prophets, yea, the Parent that begat us, and watched over us from infancy to maturity, nay, even our ourselves we may deceive, but we cannot deceive Him on Whom all Being depends; and Who will Sit in Judgment upon every Human Soul, Determining in Equal Righteousness and Wisdom the Sentence to be Pro-

nounced on every word and work, and thought and purpose, and which His Omniscience will Faithfully Reveal before Men and Angels. If these Things be so, and Assuredly They are, as GOD is TRUTH, how should Hypocrisy be driven from the heart, and a holy love and devout obedience to the Will of GOD Abound in us, did we sufficiently take heed to Them. And though Man seeth not as GOD Seeth the Fulness of the Effects of the Relative Judgments Which Await the Righteous and the Wicked, or him that serveth The LORD and him that serveth Him not; yet is Enough Laid Open to our finite comprehension to excite us to avoid the One, and to cleave to the Other; Teaching us that on our decision and adoption will depend the Election or Rejection of us, when The SPIRITUAL DAVID Assumes His Everlasting Government.

So little expectation did even Jesse, the Father of so many Sons, entertain that the Last would be the Foremost in The DIVINE Adoption, that, though all Others were, he was not even called to the Sacrifice, as directed by the Prophet, no exception having been made by him; and the care of the sheep, perhaps, weighed additionally in the Father's mind. But how shallow are the reasonings of Man when put in competition with The DIVINE Counsels. GOD it is That Setteth the Solitary in Families. HE Bringeth down Some, and Setteth up Others; and Whom The LORD Will, He Chooseth, and there is no evading His Decrees. In all our exercises of elective powers, and most especially in those appertaining to Spiritual appointments and administrations, we should, like Samuel, pray in fervency to The LORD to Guide us in our choice, that we prefer not an Eliab to a David.

“*And The SPIRIT of The LORD Came upon David from that day forward.*” GOD Giveth the life of the Body, and why should it be doubted that He Giveth the life of the Soul? This indeed, in a degree, He Giveth equally to All: but we all use not the Gift alike; for too Many of us, in too many instances, misuse It: we pervert the faculties and powers of the Body from the paths of temperance, sobriety, and chastity; we dedicate its energies less to the honour of The GIVER, than to the promotion of our own selfish and sensual gratification. But with All it is not so; and though None of us but grieve The HOLY SPIRIT at times, yet it is not in the disposition of All to be so reprobate, as entirely to quench Its Influence. “*The LORD Knoweth Them that are His.*” Even Gifted as was David thus Pre-eminently with DIVINE Grace, yet was not his free Agency taken from him; for, as will be shown hereafter, he resisted The SPIRIT by yielding to the impulse of carnal desire,—his conscience, however, soon convinced him of his error, and his heart, was vexed, and he grieved for the sin he committed, and he deeply repented of it; and The LORD in Mercy Put away the Remembrance of his iniquity for CHRIST'S Sake, and Renewed a right Spirit within him: and the Work of The LORD Prospered in his hand.

“*But The SPIRIT of The LORD Departed from Saul; and an evil Spirit from The LORD troubled him: and Saul's Servants said unto him, ‘Behold, now an evil Spirit from GOD troubleth thee; let our Lord now command thy Servants which are before thee, to seek out a Man who is a cunning Player on an harp, and it shall come to pass, when the evil Spirit from GOD is upon thee, that he shall play with his hand, and thou shalt be well!’ And Saul said unto his Servants, ‘Provide me now a Man, that can play well, and bring him to me!’ Then answered One of the Servants and said, ‘Behold, I have seen a Son of Jesse, the Beth-lehemite, that is cunning in playing, and a mighty valiant Man, and a Man of war, and prudent in matters, and a comely Person; and The LORD is with him.’ Wherefore Saul sent Messengers unto Jesse, and said, ‘Send me David, thy Son, which is with the sheep!’ And Jesse took an ass laden with bread, and a bottle of wine, and a kid, and sent them by David, his Son, unto Saul. And David came to*

*Saul, and stood before him : and he loved him greatly : and he became his Armour-Bearer. And Saul sent to Jesse, saying, ' Let David, I pray thee, stand before me ! for he hath found favour in my sight.' And it came to pass, when the evil Spirit from GOD was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand : so Saul was refreshed, and was well ; and the evil Spirit departed from him."*—1 Sam. xvi, 14 to 23.

Where The SPIRIT of GOD is not, there prevails the Spirit of evil, from the very principle of our Nature, for Servants we must be either of GOD or Mammon ; and Satan reigns in the heart, with all evil affections, where the Graces of The HOLY SPIRIT are obstinately and presumptuously expelled. But the evil Spirit, that was Visited upon Saul, was probably a mental malady, which tore and grievously tormented him ; leaving him, for the time, no power of reason, though holding the reins of Government, thus placing him, though the first Man in the Nation, lower in the scale of misery than the Meanest of his Subjects. It was a temporal Chastisement for a Spiritual offence. The Power of The LORD was thereby Manifested in Executing Judgment upon the Earth. A faint semblance of the furies of the Damned was exhibited in Saul's sufferings ; and Merciful indeed will That GOD Prove Who Inflicted it, if this be all the Punishment for Saul's guilt in unmindfulness of his CREATOR'S Command ; and that the Great Work of GOD'S Reconciliation through CHRIST'S Mediation (Which is alike Applicable to all times and Ages of the World) shall, in the Day of Universal Judgment, be Realized in him, when the Wicked shall cease from troubling. The influence of music upon the mind is too generally felt not to be generally acknowledged : and the direction of it to the Praise and Glory of GOD, as exemplified by King David even from his opening Manhood, may occasion the Spirit of evil thoughts in the war between the Flesh and the Spirit, whether in Ourselves or Others, to depart from its corrupting and contaminating hold upon the Soul.

The character of David, though thus concisely drawn by a Servant of Saul, has yet much in it of feature to interest and instruct. He was not only cunning, that is skilful, in playing upon an instrument, having dedicated some of the leisure hours that a pastoral life afforded him to the culture of music, with a taste the most chaste and devotional, but he was also a valiant Man, endowed naturally with vigour of body and firmness and collectedness of mind.—The trust he had in his GOD, Who is The Arm of Strength, and the purity of his own motives, which had GOD for their AUTHOR as well as their End, gave him that fortitude and courage, which nothing could subdue, but which rose with the difficulties opposed to them. And it will invariably be found, whilst unhappily the occasion for the display of valour exists from the ambitious and encroaching dispositions of Some of our Fellow-Creatures, that the truest courage belongs to the truest Christian ; and that the reverential and habitual walking as in the Sight of GOD excludes from the Soul the sense of fear at the eye or violence of Man. To valour it seems David added the virtue of prudence from an early age, "a virtue without which not only (in the language of One of the ablest Champions in the cause of Virtue and Religion) is knowledge useless, wit ridiculous, and genius contemptible," but valour is Self-destructive. To the graces of the mind and the heart was added to David the attractiveness of Person, of very secondary consideration, and no otherwise produced by or dependent upon ourselves than as sweetness of temper, intelligence of mind, and general temperance are calculated to ornament (which they indisputably do) a countenance associated with them. But the most valuable Property of David was That of having "The Hand of The LORD with him :—" a Property in comparison with Which all the excellence of skill, all the fruits of valour, all the effects of prudence, and all the

influence of beauty, are poor and profitless without It; and This it is in the power of every Soul alive, however untutored in Human science, however destitute of animal power, however otherwise without the wisdom of the serpent, and though with a visage no otherwise attractive, to obtain: for with the heart Man believeth unto Righteousness; and The LORD, Who Looketh upon the heart, Knoweth Them that are His: and we have the Assurance of TRUTH Itself, that all Things work together for Good to them, that love GOD and observe His Testimonies.

In the instance of David, as well as of Joseph and Daniel, we see the Influence of JEHOVAH Superinducing the counsels of the Mighty upon Earth, and His Great and Gracious Purposes Advanced in the seemingly ordinary operations of Human action; and the Predesignations of The DIVINE Will confirmed by the free-agency of Man. With a mind active as that of David, the appointment to the Post of Armour-Bearer to the King, and an Attendant upon his Person, gave David, perhaps, the first rudiments of Royal Governance, which afterwards ripened so exemplarily in him unto perfection; and, doubtless, with him no opportunity of improvement was lost. And who is there, that has not, through CHRIST, an Immortal Crown Set before him, and whose interest it is, commensurate with the Eternity of the Life to Come, to strive in the Life that is to qualify himself, in GOD'S Graciously Appointed Way, to win and wear It; and by whom every opportunity of righteous Self-government upon Gospel Principles, so indispensable a qualification as it is, should be faithfully embraced.

△ *"Now the Philistines gathered together their Armies to battle, and were gathered together at Shochoh, which belongeth to Judah, and pitched between Shochoh and Azekah in Ephes-dammim. And Saul and the Men of Israel were gathered together, and pitched by the Valley of Elah, and set the battle in array against the Philistines: and the Philistines stood on a Mountain on the one side, and Israel stood on a Mountain on the other side: and there was a Valley between them. And there went out a Champion out of the Camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span; and he had an helmet of brass upon his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail; and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of brass: and he had greaves of brass upon his legs, and a target of brass between his shoulders: and the staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam: and his spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron: and One bearing a shield, went before him! And he stood and cried unto the Armies of Israel, and said unto them, 'Why are ye come out to set your battle in array? Am not I a Philistine, and ye Servants to Saul? choose you a Man for you, and let him come down to me! if he be able to fight with me and kill me, then will we be your Servants: but if I prevail against him and kill him, then shall ye be our Servants, and serve us.' And the Philistine said, 'I defy the Armies of Israel this day! Give me a Man, that we may fight together!' When Saul and all Israel heard those words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid. Now David was the Son of that Ephrathite of Beth-lehem-Judah, whose name was Jesse; and he had eight Sons: and the Man went among Men for an old Man in the days of Saul: and the three eldest Sons of Jesse went and followed Saul to the battle: and the names of his three Sons, that went to the battle, were Eliab, the first-born; and next unto him, Abinadab; and the third, Shammah: and David was the youngest; and the three Eldest followed Saul. But David went, and returned from Saul to feed his Father's sheep at Beth-lehem. And the Philistine drew near morning and evening, and presented himself forty days. And Jesse said unto David, his Son, 'Take now, for thy Brethren, an ephah of this parched corn and these ten loaves, and run to the camp to thy Brethren; and carry these ten cheeses unto the Captain of their Thousand, and look how thy Brethren fare; and take their pledge!' Now Saul, and they, and all the*

Men of Israel, were in the Valley of Elah, fighting with the Philistines. And David rose up early in the morning, and left the sheep with a Keeper, and took and went as Jesse had commanded him; and he came to the trench, as the Host was going forth to the fight, and shouted for the battle: for Israel and the Philistines had put the battle in array, Army against Army: and David left his carriage in the hand of the Keeper of the carriage, and ran into the Army, and came and saluted his Brethren: and as he talked with them, behold, there came up the Champion (the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name), out of the Armies of the Philistines, and spake according to the same words; and David heard them. And all the Men of Israel, when they saw the Man, fled from him, and were sore afraid: and the Men of Israel said, 'Have ye seen this Man, that is come up? Surely to defy Israel is he come up! And it shall be, that the Man, who killeth him, the King will enrich him with great riches, and will give him his Daughter, and make his Father's House free in Israel.' And David spake to the Men, that stood by him, saying, 'What shall be done to the Man, that killeth this Philistine, and taketh away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the Armies of The Living GOD?' And the People answered him after this manner, saying, 'So shall it be done to the Man that killeth him.' And Eliab, his eldest Brother, heard when he spake unto the Men; and Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, 'Why camest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the Wilderness? I know thy pride and the naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle.' And David said, 'What have I now done? Is there not a cause?' And he turned from him toward Another, and spake after the same manner. And the People answered him again after the former manner. And when the words were heard which David spake, they rehearsed them before Saul; and he sent for him. And David said to Saul, 'Let no Man's heart fail because of him! Thy Servant will go and fight with this Philistine.' And Saul said to David, 'Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for thou art but a Youth, and he a Man of war from his youth!' And David said unto Saul, 'Thy Servant kept his Father's sheep, and there came a lion and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock; and I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he rose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him and slew him: thy Servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the Armies of The Living GOD.' David said, moreover, 'The LORD, That Delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, He will Deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine.' And Saul said unto David, 'Go, and The LORD be with thee!' And Saul armed David with his armour, and he put an helmet of brass upon his head; also he armed him with a coat of mail. And David girded his sword upon his armour; and he assayed to go, for he had not proved it. And David said unto Saul, 'I cannot go with these! for I have not proved them.' And David put them off him: and he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a Shepherd's bag which he had, even in a scrip; and his sling was in his hand; and he drew near to the Philistine. And the Philistine came on, and drew near unto David; and the Man that bare his shield went before him: and when the Philistine looked about and saw David, he disdained him; for he was but a Youth, and ruddy, and of a fair countenance. And the Philistine said unto David, 'Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with axes?' And the Philistine cursed David by his gods: and the Philistine said to David, 'Come to me! and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air and to the beasts of the field.' Then said David to the Philistine, 'Thou comest to me with a sword and with a spear and with a shield: but I come to thee in the Name of The LORD of HOSTS, The GOD of the Armies of Israel, Whom thou hast defied.



*This day will The LORD Deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee: and I will give the carcasses of the Host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the Earth may know that there is A GOD in Israel: and all this Assembly shall know that The LORD Saveth not with sword and spear; for the battle is The LORD'S, and He will Give you into our hands.'* And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David hasted and ran toward the Army to meet the Philistine: and David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone and slung it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth. So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine and slew him. But there was no sword in the hand of David; therefore David ran and stood upon the Philistine and took his sword, and drew it out of the sheath thereof, and slew him; and cut off his head therewith. And when the Philistines saw their Champion was dead, they fled. And the Men of Israel and of Judah arose and shouted, and pursued the Philistines until they came to the Valley and to the gates of Ekron: and the Wounded of the Philistines fell down by the way to Shaaraim, even unto Gath and unto Ekron. And the Children of Israel returned from chasing after the Philistines, and they spoiled their tents. And David took the head of the Philistine, and brought it to Jerusalem: but he put his armour in his tent."—1 Sam. xvii, 1. 54.

The very description of the figure of Goliath is enough to fill the mind with awe; and his presence, in the character of an Enemy, might well strike terror into the hearts of those that, although Israelites, were but of little faith. Saul, though towering loftily in stature above his Subjects, and bred to war, felt himself unequal to cope with him upon any reasonable estimate of Human power; and he had previously proved that he was wanting in that faith, which, working by obedience, waxeth strong and valiantly.

△ All the attractions of a Court seemed not to have effaced from the mind of David the duties of filial affection and service. Notwithstanding his appointment as the King's Armour-Bearer, and the regard that Saul entertained for him, he yet gave a preference to his paternal roof, and sought the return of the endearments of a pastoral life, as more in unison with the pious tenour of his thoughts, and presenting less hindrance to his devotional pursuits.

One proof that Jesse was deserving of such attention at the hand of David, and that his conduct was such as to incite to a reverential feeling and love towards him, is offered in the narrative of his considerateness of his other Sons, who had followed Saul to the battle, and his appointing David to take from them "their pledge" of that affection which the old Man was so desirous should mutually subsist between them.

Jesse directed David to run to the camp, and he accordingly rose up early, even for a Shepherd, in the morning to go thither, impelled alike by filial reverence and fraternal love; and when he came to his Brethren he saluted them with all the ingenuousness of unsuspecting innocence.

Though David asked what was to be the reward of him, that overcame the Philistine, he did not wait for the answer, till he had proclaimed that a love for his Country and a zeal for the Glory of his GOD were the primary considerations that led him to contemplate an exposure of himself in the contest.

Ungracious and ungrateful as was the return, which David met with from his Brother, it did not awaken in him any angry feelings; but, almost distrusting his own motives, when so construed by a Brother, he mildly asks him "What have I now done? Is there not a cause?" David had been Anointed by the Prophet of The LORD, and might he not reasonably hope that he might, through

The Same DIVINE Appointment, be the Chosen Deliverer of Israel; and was there not an ample cause, when the Honour of his GOD in the Armies of His People was daringly defied by a Heathen, that he should stand forth and, knowing that The LORD had before been his SAVIOUR, hope that through him He would give Salvation unto Israel?

David had witnessed the terror that Goliath's presence and his taunting challenge had struck through all the ranks of the Israelitish Battalions. Though confident in his own prowess, he did not upbraid them with cowardice; but in the spirit of true magnanimity, held out to them encouragement against despondency.

Notwithstanding the experience David had had of the extraordinary power that belonged to him, in having overcome two of the most fierce and powerful Beasts of the Forest, he did not presume thereupon as the effect of Human strength and courage, but gave to The LORD of All Power and Might the Glory and the Praise, and made Him his Strength and his Confidence. Nor did David assume that, from his individual merits, The ALMIGHTY would Interpose on his behalf, but he rested his hope of DIVINE Protection on the blasphemy of his Adversary, and the defiance vented by the Latter against the People of GOD.

David knew that the race is not always to the Swift, nor the battle to the Strong; but that the Victory is with The LORD of HOSTS, and that He Saveth by Many or by Few; though not always with sword and shield. More unequivocally to show the Israelites, as well as Heathens, that The LORD was on David's side; and that he did not fear what Man could do unto him, he laid aside the ordinary weapons of offence and instruments of protection, and went out against the mail-clad Giant defenceless almost as a Minister of peace. Such is the influence of true faith; such the effect of a pious confidence in The ALMIGHTY'S Help when fighting in His Cause.

In such utter contempt did the Philistine hold David, that he would not condescend to meet him; but, after venting his curses upon him, as it should seem for his audacity in disturbing him, says, If David would come to him (as though he doubted whether David would venture to do so), that he would exterminate him from the earth; thus arrogating to himself the power of life and death, without heeding The LORD of Life.

In the fulness of The HOLY GHOST, Which is Strength as well as Wisdom, from Whom is the Gift of foreknowledge, as well as of power to understand even the Deep Things of GOD, and to overcome all Adversaries, David, with the eye and tongue of Prophecy, foresaw and foretold that the great Work of Israel's Redemption from temporal Enemies was to be Accomplished, through DIVINE Aid and Favour, by him. David said not "If The LORD Will, He can Enable me to accomplish this," but he spoke as One having Authority from On HIGH, and he avowed That Authority, admitting, substantially, that it was not his arm that of itself could gain the victory, but that it was The LORD That Wrought That Work in him; a Work which should Redound to The DIVINE Honour, and Advance the Gracious Purposes of GOD to Man upon Earth. The passage beautifully and exemplarily illustrates the nature and efficacy of true faith—such faith as is strong in The LORD and in the Power of His Might, removing even mountains and overcoming obstacles to Human eye apparently insurmountable; but it does not, therefore, in the spirit of Pharasaical self-righteousness, take to itself the merit, but ascribes it to its Genuine SOURCE, The LORD Omnipotent, Who Alone Giveth strength to the Weak and wisdom to the Simple, and Who hath Chosen the foolish things of the World to confound the wise, and the weak things of the World to confound the things which are mighty; that no Flesh should glory in His Presence, otherwise than in The

LORD. "*Thou comest to me* (said David to the Philistine) *with a sword and with a spear and with a shield, but I come to thee in the Name of The LORD of HOSTS, The GOD of the Armies of Israel, Whom thou hast defied.*" What an example is here offered for the Warriors of this day to invoke the Aid of The Same ALMIGHTY POWER, and to trust in Him Who equally now, as in the days of David, Ruleth over all the Kingdoms of the Earth; and Whose Arm is not shortened, that He cannot Deliver as heretofore, nor is His Ear now Deaf to prayers, that He cannot Hear such as in fervour of spirit are made unto Him. Did David trust in The Living LORD, and proclaim that trust before Hosts of Israelites and Heathens, and persevere therein, in defiance of the upbraidings of a Brother and the mockery of the Philistine Warrior? and should we, if opposed by discouragements no greater, refuse to make Him our Confidence, and to proclaim Him as The POWER That Teacheth our hands to war and our fingers to fight, and Giveth us the Victory over Spiritual, if not over temporal Enemies?

The situation in which David placed himself was desperate. He ran towards the Philistine, who was so clothed with mail as to be vulnerable, with such weapons as David had, only in the face; and had David missed his first aim, the defenceless state in which himself was, must have made him an easy prey to the mighty power and exasperated feelings of his Antagonist. But he knew that it was the battle of The ALMIGHTY he had to fight. So against Satan himself, and all the Adversaries of our Souls, mighty and powerful as they are, and eager at all times to swallow us up, The SPIRIT of The LORD will continually Protect us, if we seek unto It, and will Arm us with That Grace, Which, like the Mandate of our Blessed SAVIOUR to the turbulent waves, by the utterance, in faith, of the words "Peace, be still!" will put to silence and confound with shame All that defy The Living LORD, and would, through us, diminish His Glory and overturn His Kingdom within the hearts of His People. How Wonderful is the Counsel of The MOST HIGH! Which thus by Means so contrary to Human conceptions, Brings His Gracious Works of Mercy to Pass! Let us, therefore, take courage from this example, and, giving the lesson thus read to us a Spiritual application, defy with fearlessness the evil passions within us, and the machinations of evil Men from without; seeing that The LORD is our Help, and that through JESUS CHRIST, The Great CAPTAIN of Salvation, He will Give us the Victory.

△ The yielding to one passion systematically, may enlarge it to an extent of influence over us, that it may seem to need a DIVINE Miracle to uproot it from our habits and affections; and this may prove an avenue for the minor passions and evil propensities of our Nature by degrees, and almost imperceptibly, to approach and enter into us, and acquire such an ascendancy over our Souls, through the effect of a rejection of religious principle (which cannot be of partial operation), as to render them also formidable antagonists in our Spiritual warfare. But *where* sin doth abound, if The HOLY SPIRIT we have not entirely quenched within us, *there* doth Grace also, through JESUS CHRIST, The Propitiation for our sins, much more Abound: and if through penitence and faith in That Same JESUS (which faith worketh by love and by an entire devotion of the heart to the Service and Glory of GOD), we resist the evil that principally besets us, we shall surely prevail; and then all the multitude of lesser passions, that have sought the destruction of our Soul's peace, like the Hosts of the Philistines when they found their Champion was dead, will take to flight.

"*And when Saul saw David go forth against the Philistine, he said unto Abner, the Captain of the Host, 'Abner! Whose Son is this Youth?' And Abner said, 'As thy Soul liveth, O King, I cannot tell.' And the King said, 'Enquire thou,*

*whose Son the Stripling is!* And as David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, Abner took him, and brought him before Saul, with the head of the Philistine in his hand. And Saul said to him, 'Whose Son art thou, thou young Man?' And David answered, 'I am the Son of thy Servant Jesse, the Beth-lehemite.' And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the Soul of Jonathan was knit with the Soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own Soul. And Saul took him that day, and would let him go no more home to his Father's house. Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own Soul: and Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword and to his bow and to his girdle." —1 Sam. xvii, 55 to the end., xviii, 1. 4.

Though so highly Distinguished by the Favour and Protection of The LORD of HOSTS, in being Made the Instrument of Salvation to GOD'S Chosen People, David seems to have been without that spirit of ambition, which is the almost inseparable attendant on success, where the heart is not humbled by religious propensity. But, amidst the feelings that such a victory, in such a Cause, was calculated to awaken, David retained that amiableness of disposition, which, added to the comeliness of his Person and the probable grace of his manner, won for him every heart that was susceptible of manly affection. The most exemplary of all of the King's Sons was so powerfully affected towards him, that in Soul he at once formed that union with David which, grounded and built up in purity and piety, was an image of that Union which shall prevail in the Life to Come amongst the Spirits of Just Men Made Perfect. The penetration of Jonathan led him at once to understand the character of David—he did not suffer the first impressions of his love to evaporate in the cold calculations of worldly-minded doubt and suspicion. He, with a Princely liberality and magnanimity, adopted the gentle Shepherd as the Companion of his bosom, and proclaimed the adoption amidst the assemblies of the Great, by decorating him with his own Princely garments and habiliments: And how justly merited by David was this mark of distinction and attachment! though from the more exalted character of David, considered without reference to situation, the interchange of social affection reflected honour mostly on Jonathan; yet was David grateful as for a blessing conferred on him, and treasured the remembrance of it, and manifested its effects upon his heart, not only whilst Jonathan lived, but even after he was silent and unconscious of it in his tomb.

*"And David went out whithersoever Saul sent him, and behaved himself wisely: and Saul set him over the Men of war, and he was accepted in the sight of all the People, and also in the sight of Saul's Servants."*—1 Sam. xviii, 5.

David seems to have added to valour wisdom, and to virtue knowledge. Distant as his occupation in early life had kept him from an intercourse or acquaintance with Courts and Governments, his mind seems to have been cultivated so as to fit him for every station. He had set The LORD always before him, and drew from Above that Wisdom, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be intreated, full of mercies and of all good fruits: and he went forward in the Strength of The LORD, and in the Power of His Might; and, like The Blessed JESUS, of Whom he was, in some degree, the Prototype, he increased in favour both with GOD and Man. But the Spirit of evil could not long rest without persecuting the "Man after GOD'S Own Heart," as it persecuted, afterwards, The SON of GOD Himself, for we read, *"And it came to pass, as they came, when David was returned from the slaughter of the Philistines, that the Women came out of all Cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tabrets, with joy, and with instruments of music: and the Women answered One Another as they played, and said, 'Saul hath slain his Thousands, and David his*

*Ten Thousands ! And Saul was very wroth, and the saying displeased him : and he said, ' They have ascribed unto David Ten Thousands ; and to me they have ascribed but Thousands ! and what can he have more but the Kingdom ? ' And Saul eyed David from that day and forward. And it came to pass on the morrow, that the evil Spirit from GOD came upon Saul, and he prophesied in the midst of the house : and David played with his hand, as at other times : and there was a javelin in Saul's hand : and Saul cast the javelin ; for he said, ' I will smite David even to the wall with it. ' And David avoided out of his presence twice."*—

1 Sam. xviii, 6 to 11. David had deserved more of praise than Saul at the mouths of the People ; it was, therefore, only consistent with right that he received it ; and had Saul possessed a true nobleness and ingenuoussness of mind, he would have been the Foremost to have proclaimed David's higher claim to his Country's gratitude : but though he held the Kingly office, he was destitute of those virtues that alone give lustre to a crown : in the pride of Human reason he had set up his judgment against the Express Commands of GOD : in the pomp of Human vanity he thought higher of himself than he ought, and, yielding to the malignant influence of envy, was galled in his Soul at the praises of Another. One evil passion begets another, and there is scarcely fixing any bounds to wickedness beyond which, if unresisted, such yieldings will not successively lead. Saul had even better opportunity, than his Son Jonathan, of judging of David's character ; and had he cherished him with Parental fondness, and made him the first Minister of his Kingdom, it was not in David to have aspired at a higher Station, or to have done otherwise than to have contributed by his wisdom and valour to the true glory of his Master's Kingdom. Thus by giving himself up a Victim to unrighteousness, Saul sacrificed his best interests, deprived himself of the blessing of a true and able Friend and Servant, and raised within his own bosom a consuming fire, which left him without inward peace for the remainder of his days. Had he checked the first risings of envy in his heart, suspicion that David might aim at superseding him in the Government could not have been generated there—for it was that passion which clouded his vision, and disfigured the Object before it—he would have then seen David in a true light, and seen him, as he was, faithful and true, meek and unassuming, fearing GOD and honouring the King. The SPIRIT of Grace Saul drove from his presence ; and, rejecting That only Sure Help against the power of Satan, Saul became the prey of that Enemy of his Soul's peace. Confirmed and assisted in his predisposition to do evil by the Devil, Saul, having surrendered up his Soul to the influence of a revengeful jealousy, is guided and governed in its indulgence by the Spirit of evil ; and The HOLY SPIRIT having entirely Withdrawn from him, he adds to detraction the baneful crime of murderous intention, thus multiplying the stings of conscience during the days of trial, and heaping up for himself evil against the Day of Judgment. It was not in David, for it is not in the spirit of Them that are The LORD'S, to return evil for evil. Engaged in the office of a truly charitable duty, that of stilling by his energies the physical inquietude of Saul's mind, how little could David have expected so unnatural a return ! Had Saul sought to have slain him in the paroxysms of his madness, to the effects of the malady alone would the act have been attributed.—But "*when David played, Saul was refreshed and was well, and the evil Spirit departed from him.*"—xvi, 23. An infinitely more mischievous Spirit of evil succeeded—the evil of the heart—the basest passions of our Nature—to gratify which Saul artfully seized the moment when the act might have the character of only mental debility, and as such be rather the subject of compassion than condemnation. What an instance this of the infirmity of Human Nature ! Saul, the Anointed of The LORD, the Chosen King over The LORD'S Own People, forgetful that The LORD Looketh

upon the heart, and that He will Judge every Man according to his work, sells himself to the Devil to work evil in the very sight of That LORD. He, whose throne, had it been founded in righteousness, would have been established for ever; who would have experienced a translation from a temporal to a Spiritual Crown, had he but obeyed the Commandments of The LORD, and followed the Precepts of His HOLY SPIRIT; for the indulgence of a disposition, big with remorse and horror to himself, and more destructive of his own than of Others' peace, he forfeited such Inestimable Blessings, and became, by self-election, the Child of the most cruel and tyrannical of Parents, the Devil.

*"And Saul was afraid of David, because The LORD was with him, and was Departed from Saul. Therefore Saul removed him from him, and made him his Captain over a Thousand; and he went out and came in before the People. And David behaved himself wisely in all his ways; and The LORD was with him: wherefore, when Saul saw that he behaved himself very wisely, he was afraid of him. But all Israel and Judah loved David, because he went out and came in before them."*—1 Sam. xviii, 12. 16.

Strange infatuation!—a King afraid of his own Subject—and that Subject the Deliverer, under the KING of Kings, of his Kingdom—the Soother of his sorrows—the faithful Executor of his commissions. Afraid!—To what an abject state of wretchedness does the folly of following where the evil tendency of our Nature leads us, in a departure from GOD, and the Ways of His Commandments and the works of His Law, reduce us! the madness of the heart brings on an accumulation of self-inflicted torments, and, united with the phrenzies of mental distraction, exhibits in the Life that is, perhaps some faint resemblance only of the state of the Damned for ever and ever in the Life to Come. But the medicine for the cure of this is within our own reach; we must seek it, in the fearful time of need, of The Great PHYSICIAN of Souls; and, if we seek it earnestly, we shall not fail to find balm in our Gilead. *The LORD had Departed from Saul;* but, had Saul judged wisely, his fear would have been, not of David, but of The LORD; and towards David should have been extended his love for the sake of That LORD, Who might then, in the Extensiveness of His Clemency, have Returned to him with Healing on His Wings, and have Spoken Pardon and Peace to his Soul. David would then have been unto him as the Oil of Gladness: They might have taken sweet counsel together, and gone to the House of The LORD in company.

The Office to which David was appointed, it seems reasonable to conclude, was not only of a military, but of a judicial nature,—for the term "going out and coming in before the People" was used by Moses in his prayer for a Successor: *"And Moses spake unto The LORD, saying, 'Let The LORD, The GOD of the Spirits of all Flesh, Set a Man over the Congregation, which may go out before them, and which may go in before them, and which may lead them out, and which may bring them in; that the Congregation of The LORD be not as sheep which have no Shepherd.'"*—Num. xxvii, 15. 17. David had been a careful Shepherd of the sheep of his natural Father; and, when appointed by him, who, as the Head, should have been the Father of his People, to be a Ruler over a portion of them, he showed not less watchfulness and zeal for the welfare of such Charge: the consequence, as might naturally have been expected, was his winning the love of those that were under his care; but that love was large enough to have comprehended within its scope him, by whom David had been appointed, had Saul made a right use of the occasion—for the righteous acts of a Steward invariably reflect lustre on his Lord.

*"And Saul said to David, 'Behold my elder Daughter Merah, her will I give thee to Wife: Only be thou valiant for me, and fight The LORD'S battles!'"*

*for Saul said, 'Let not mine hand be upon him! But let the hand of the Philistines be upon him!' And David said unto Saul, 'Who am I, and what is my life, or my Father's Family in Israel, that I should be Son in Law to the King?' But it came to pass, at the time when Merah, Saul's Daughter, should have been given to David, that she was given unto Adriel, the Meholathite, to Wife."*—1 Sam. xviii, 17. 19.

Disappointed in his first hope of slaying David with his own hand, and in his second, probably, of making him ridiculous in the eyes of the People, as placed suddenly in a situation of peculiar difficulty, to which Saul might have considered his abilities unequal, in the hypocritical covering of one of the most endearing and attractive of characters Saul presented himself to David, and offers him the highly esteemed, and, as it seems, contested prize of his own Daughter, Merah's hand and affections. It is true that Saul did not expect that a marriage would take place, but looked to the destruction of David in war with his Country's Enemies, from the arduous, and, apparently to Saul, impracticable task that was to be imposed upon him as the condition of such marriage. Had Saul stood in need of the knowledge of the unaspiring nature of David's disposition, and of the reverence of his heart for his Sovereign, he had the exercise of these qualities now fully offered to his observation. The People had hailed him as a greater Deliverer than Saul—he could not but be conscious of the important and acceptable service rendered both to Saul and to his Country by the destruction of Goliath—in his judicial character he must have felt by their fruits the wisdom of his measures: in person, it seems, he was beautiful to look upon; here, therefore, were accumulated reasons for making the union less substantially unequal or unmerited on his side. But David's humility restrained him from hinting at any of these, or even in silence acquiescing in his royal Master's proposal. He bursts forth at once into a declaration against so high and enviable an honour being conferred upon him, and was virtually the Advocate against himself, saying, "*Who am I? and what is my life, or my Father's Family in Israel, that I should be Son in Law to the King?*" He not only himself looks back upon his humble origin and yet more humble occupation, but forces Saul and those around him to do so likewise. And yet was One so meek and unassuming, the fear of Saul! So full of folly is the mind of Man when the evil passions of his Nature are suffered to controul it. But Saul's object was, not to reward a faithful and honest Servant, deserving richly, and both competent and willing to repay liberally, all that even a Kingly Master could bestow upon him: but to gratify the mean, and dastardly, and self-tormenting passion of envy or jealousy. At the time, therefore, when the appointed period arrived for David's marriage, his proposed Bride was wedded to Another, whether under a previous betrothment or not. With a mind sensitive as that of David, displaying in the different stages of life, as occasion called, the different principles into action, filial obedience, fraternal love, courage in the causes of humanity, patriotic devotion, the zeal of friendship, and unwearied loyalty, it is not to be supposed but that the prospect of such an union must have laid open to his lively and poetic imagination scenes of delight unwitnessed before, and over which the piety of his heart was calculated, rather than not, to spread a rich but sober tint of colouring. At the moment then when these hopes seemed fast ripening into fruition—when the celebration of the nuptial ceremony was, in idea at least, entered upon, and GOD, and Man, and Woman too, seemed to crown him with favours—when that bliss was, as he thought, preparing for him, which domestic life has alone the power of bestowing; to be then told that She, whom his Soul had dwelt upon as the promised Partner of his bosom, the meed of his labours, and the solace of his cares, was given, irrevocably given, to Another—what was it but to inflict a wound to his peace more galling than would have been the

javelin of Saul, if, when cast at him, it had pierced even to his heart! And would not this torture satisfy the craving appetite of Saul's envy? Was ingenuity still to be racked to find poison of still greater virulence to infuse into the cup of One so harmless and unsuspecting of harm? With what industry, therefore, should we suppress the first risings of envy in our bosom, since such and so baneful is its influence, and so increasing its effects!

*"And Michal, Saul's Daughter, loved David; and they told Saul, and the thing pleased him. And Saul said, 'I will give him her, that she may be a snare to him, and that the hand of the Philistines may be against him.' Wherefore Saul said to David, 'Thou shalt this day be my Son in Law in the One of the Twain.' And Saul commanded his Servants, saying, 'Commune with David secretly and say, 'Behold, the King hath delight in thee, and all his Servants love thee: now therefore, be the King's Son in Law!' And Saul's Servants spake those words in the ears of David. And David said, 'Seemeth it to you a light thing to be a King's Son in Law, seeing that I am a Poor Man and lightly esteemed?'"*—1 Sam. xviii, 20, 23.

In further evidence of the unfatherly and unnatural disposition of Saul, on Another of his own Daughters avowing a deep affection for David, and seeking an alliance with him, Saul embraces the opportunity with eagerness; not, however, to gratify the commendable desire of his own Offspring, and to afford her and her Progeny the surest means of substantial happiness in the society and protection of a virtuous and pious Heart, and a wise and prudent Head; but for the sake of indulging his hellish thirst for revenge; giving his consent to his Daughter's wish, and allowing her to feed on the hope of such an union, with his predetermination to make her a Widow before she became a Wife; and even in the savageness of his heart, having pleasure at such a cause to give scope to his hatred and malice against the faithful Servant of his will. The word of the King had been pledged, that the Conqueror of Goliath should have the King's Daughter as the reward of so valuable a service; it was, therefore, positively due to David; a matter of absolute right in him to expect the fulfilment of that promise; but David again only thought of the inequality of his condition, and disclaimed the right; openly professing himself to be unworthy of what he at the same time insisted on to be an honour higher than even Saul's own Servants by their manner seemed to consider it. Whether they were ashamed of their Master's deception, and not earnest, therefore, in the execution of the office to which they were appointed, or, on the contrary, by an over zeal for the furtherance of the King's object, forgot the respectfulness that was due to the Royal Family in proposing an alliance with it to a Commoner, may be questionable.

*"And the Servants of Saul told him, saying, 'On this manner spake David.' And Saul said, 'Thus shall ye say to David—'The King desireth not any dowry, but an hundred foreskins of the Philistines, to be avenged of the King's Enemies.' But Saul thought to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines."*—1 Sam. xviii, 24, 25.

David, though rich in the Protection of his Heavenly KING, and though of good report amongst the People, both for his valour in the field, and his wisdom in the council, yet considered himself as poor and of no reputation in comparison with what a King's Daughter might expect: and though Saul had the testimony of his own Servants, and even of his own Son, to the lowly yet loyal heart of David, still did he continue to regard him as the Rival for his throne, and was bent on his destruction; willing even that he should become the prey of the Philistines, notwithstanding the recent experience Saul had had, that the Salvation, both of his crown and Kingdom were, under GOD, produced by David's overcoming the Champion of the Nation, when None Other of the Israelitish Warriors would dare even to face him; and though, were David removed, Saul



could have no reasonable security against the influence of a similar panic in his Army, should another Goliath arise.

*"And when his Servants told David these words, it pleased David well to be the King's Son in Law: and the days were not expired: wherefore David arose and went, he and his Men, and slew of the Philistines two hundred Men; and David brought their foreskins, and they gave them in full tale to the King, that he might be the King's Son in Law. And Saul gave him Michal, his Daughter, to Wife."*—1 Sam. xviii, 26, 27.

By how much the Soul of David was elated with joy at the prospect of this promised connection, by so much in proportion must sorrow have preyed upon his heart at the disappointment, to which he so undeservedly on his own part, and so dishonourably on that of the King, had been previously exposed. But insurmountable as Saul conceived to be the obstacle placed by him in the way of David's happiness, David even doubled in performance the task allotted to him. The service of his Master and the cause of his Country had the influence of love to back them, and were irresistible. In that day the meek and unoffending and unresisting Spirit of Christianity did not prevail. Self-defence is not inconsistent with Gospel Tenets; but It Restrains unnecessary warfare and acts of aggression; though the fault of these is rather with the Governors than the Governed; and to a fearful responsibility in the ~~Letter~~ <sup>Letter</sup> does the influence of ambition give rise. CHRIST Gave us a *New Commandment*, that we "*love One Another*,"—that we love not only our Neighbours but our Enemies; and that rather than do evil, we should cut off the hand or pluck out the eye to disable us from executing an evil purpose. The Christian Soldier, therefore, would have pleasure, not in being commissioned to cut off the fleshy foreskins of his barbarous Neighbours, but to cut off the foreskins of sensuality and lust, and to allay the propensities for cruelty and turbulence, or restless ambition in their hearts; that so far from destroying their bodies, he might save even their Souls alive.

△ *"And Saul saw and knew that The LORD was with David, and that Michal, Saul's Daughter, loved him: and Saul was yet the more afraid of David; and Saul became David's Enemy continually. Then the Princes of the Philistines went forth; and it came to pass, after they went forth, that David behaved himself more wisely than all the Servants of Saul, so that his name was much set by."*—1 Sam. xviii, 28. 30.

With everything, that should disarm suspicion, and which should gratify the feelings both of a Father and a King, in the conduct and character of David, as evidencing a faithful and exemplary discharge of all his relative duties, yet was the Soul of Saul more restless and perturbed in proportion as the various merits of his Son in Law unfolded themselves; and though the Child of his own loins confirmed by her conduct, since her union with David, the empire he had previously acquired over her heart, proclaiming thereby, in language the most intelligible, that her peace depended on his preservation, yet did this unnatural Father contemplate the sacrifice of Both. Even the advance of his most formidable Enemies could not alter his purpose, terrified as he had been before by them, so as to offer the most honourable station that a Subject could hold, that of an alliance with the Royal House, to the Conqueror of their Hero; and though David was the only Man, of all his dominions, who dared even to hazard himself, and that, not from personal, but patriotic and religious motives; yet did envy, at his superior merit, and the testimony naturally borne to it by Others, rankle in Saul's bosom and light up a fire of desolation in his breast, that consumed even the temple, which Reason and Experience had built there as an asylum of Self-preservation. But The LORD was with David; and vain as is the help of Man, still vainer is his hate, when opposed to the Power and the Merciful Designs of his MAKER. Without even the apprehension of danger from such a quarter,

where indeed there was the least justifiable ground for suspecting it; but where there was the most power to minister destruction, David, in the unsuspectingness of his heart, was left without other defence than his general trust in The LORD; and to him, as among the Generations of old, the observations of the wise Son of Sirach may, in a pre-eminent degree, be applied, "Did ever Any trust in The LORD, and was confounded? or did Any abide in His fear, and was Forsaken?"

*"And Saul spake to Jonathan, his Son, and to all his Servants, that they should kill David. But Jonathan, Saul's Son, delighted much in David; and Jonathan told David, saying, 'Saul, my Father, seeketh to kill thee! Now, therefore, I pray thee, take heed to thyself until the morning, and abide in a secret place, and hide thyself! and I will go out and stand beside my Father in the field, where thou art, and I will commune with my Father of thee; and what I see, that I will tell thee.'"*—1 Sam. xix, 1. 3.

Saul could not have been ignorant of the nobleness of Jonathan's heart, and he had personally witnessed the distinguished respect paid by Jonathan to David; but so wildly was Saul's Soul infuriated against the inoffensive David, that he strives to render such a Son the Murderer of such a Friend and Brother. Great, however, as was the reverence paid to Saul by Jonathan, both as a Son and a Subject, yet was he not to be led to do so great an evil and sin against HEAVEN:—Still he did not inconsiderately spurn the command, or expostulate with his Father on the enormity and injustice of the act he contemplated, but availing himself of the full knowledge he had of the violent and ungovernable passion of his Father, at the time when it was thus raging, he, in the spirit of the most zealous friendship, sought first an opportunity of preparing David against the danger that so imminently threatened him, and then, in the prudence of friendly counsel, suggested expedients the most likely to rescue David from the perils that surrounded him. So is it that they, who grow in Favour with GOD, grow also in favour with All, that are estimable among Men.

*"And Jonathan spake good of David unto Saul, his Father, and said unto him, 'Let not the King sin against his Servant, against David, because he hath not sinned against thee; and because his works have been to thee-ward very good: for he did put his life in his hand, and slew the Philistine; and The LORD Wrought a Great Salvation for all Israel! Thou sawest it and didst rejoice. Wherefore then wilt thou sin against innocent blood, to slay David without a cause?' And Saul hearkened unto the voice of Jonathan, and Saul sware, 'As The LORD Liveth, he shall not be slain.'"*—1 Sam. xix, 4 to 6.

Having used the precaution he deemed necessary to prevent the effects of the immediate impulse of his Father's malice, and having allowed time to elapse for its violence to abate, Jonathan, in the spirit of brotherly love towards David, approaches Saul, and in all the wisdom and earnestness of a Spiritual Counsellor and dutiful Son, reasons with his Kingly Father against the atrocious act he had meditated. Knowing the goodness of David's heart, and the excellence of his conduct, Jonathan sets these before the King as arguments against his destruction of such a Subject: with all the eloquence and skill of the profoundest Advocate, he urges the claim of David to the gratitude and confidence of his King, as well as Country, and boldly tells his Father he will be guilty, in that he will have shed innocent blood, if he recall not his fell and murderous purpose. In pressing his merit as having risked his life in the combat with Goliath, Jonathan, in the piety of a true Israelite, acknowledges that David was the Chosen Instrument in the Hand of GOD for effecting their Nation's Deliverance: and he pushes home this argument with the fullest force, by challenging his Father to admit that he, himself, was an Eye-Witness of it; thereby resorting, with great ingenuity, to an expedient, which was the most likely to awaken in Saul a consciousness of A DIVINE PROVIDENCE, and a sense of the resistless Influence of His Power,

and of the folly of acting in defiance of the Ordinance of His Will. He then ~~admonishes~~ him of the joy, which he experienced at the effect of David's valour, thereby leading the King's mind to consider that, if David were thus cut off, and another such occasion for Saul's fears should arise, he might, through his own most miserable and self-destructive policy, find himself without another Saviour in Israel; and then concludes in all the impressiveness of interrogation: "*wherefore then wilt thou sin against innocent blood to slay David without a cause?*" So good was the seed thus sown by Jonathan in his Father's heart, that it suddenly sprung up, and seemed to promise a fruitful harvest; for Saul not only professedly relinquished his diabolical purpose, but ratified the avowal by the most solemn of oaths, saying, "*As The LORD Liveth, David shall not be slain!*" That The LORD did Live Saul could not but be conscious of; for that The LORD was with David was the cause of Saul's fear of him. It is, therefore, reasonable to suppose, that such was the real intent of Saul's heart at the moment, when worked upon by the affectionate zeal and unanswerable reasoning of Jonathan. But Saul had rejected the Grace of GOD, and he sought not in humility, and prayer, and penitence for Its Restitution: and his heart, as is that of every Son of Adam when left, through sensuality, and pride, to its own guidance and governance, was too much overrun with the thorns of jealousy to suffer the seed, however good, and however at first joyfully received, to grow up to maturity.

△ "*And Jonathan called David; and Jonathan shewed him all those things. And Jonathan brought David to Saul; and he was in his presence, as in times past.*"—1 Sam. xix, 7.

Thus we see the force and effect of friendship, when exercised in a righteous cause. To all Human appearance its triumph was complete: the reconciliation, so devoutly and laudably wished by Jonathan, seemed to have been effected; and thus Jonathan succeeded in the first object of his heart, that of averting from the Royal Mind the foul design of David's murder; and secondly, in replacing his favourite David within the sphere of Royal patronage and protection. But unstable as the wind are the purposes of Self-depending Man!

"*And there was war again; and David went out and fought with the Philistines, and slew them with a great slaughter: and they fled from him. And the evil Spirit from The LORD was upon Saul, as he sat in his house with his javelin in his hand: and David played with his hand. And Saul sought to smite David even to the wall with the javelin; but he slipped away out of Saul's presence, and he smote the javelin into the wall: and David fled, and escaped that night. Saul also sent Messengers unto David's house to watch him, and to slay him in the morning: and Michal, David's Wife, told him, saying, 'If thou save not thy life to-night, to-morrow thou shalt be slain!' So Michal let David down through a window: and he went and fled and escaped. And Michal took an image and laid it in the bed, and put a pillow of goat's hair for his bolster, and covered it with a cloth: and when Saul sent Messengers to take David, she said, 'He is sick.' And Saul sent the Messengers again to see David, saying, 'Bring him up to me in the bed, that I may slay him!' And when the Messengers were come in, behold, there was an image in the bed with a pillow of goat's hair for his bolster. And Saul said unto Michal, 'Why hast thou deceived me so, and sent away mine Enemy, that he is escaped?' And Michal answered Saul,—He said unto me, 'Let me go! why should I kill thee.'"*"—1 Sam. xix, 8, 17.

A second deliverance, wrought by the same Instrument, from the grasp of the same fierce and exasperated Enemy, seems to have revived the spirit of jealousy in the bosom of Saul, which for a season only he had endeavoured to suppress, but without resorting to such means as humiliation, and fasting, and

r, by which the spirit of evil may be entirely rooted out from the Human ; and that heart, instead of being a heart of stone, be made a heart of flesh, r and harmless as a new-born Babe's. Had David withdrawn from the the crown, the Kingdom, the very life of Saul, might have fallen before dour of the Philistines. In the attempt to save these, the life of David, red doubly dear to him by his conjugal connection, was again put to the d. And is it in Man, when bereaved of the Grace of GOD, to be not only to such favours conferred, but to make them the cause of inward uneas- and outward violence ; of conduct alike outraging the laws of justice and ude ! but so History declares in all ages, and our own hearts, when yielded the base passions of our Nature, emanating, as they do, from the Spirit of confirm the awful truth. How obviously, therefore, does it become our est, as well as duty, to guard our hearts against the evil passions that assault ert the Soul, lest in the hour of temptation we fall away, like Saul, from our r righteous purposes, having discarded That Spiritual Help, Which, through IST, can alone Deliver us from evil. David having fought the battles of against his temporal Foes, in all the tender attention of a Son, in all the y of a Subject, in all the dutifulness of a Servant, strove to vanquish also piritual Enemies ; but the evil Spirit had been suffered to take too fast a of Saul's mind to be shaken from its possession, even by the Inspired touch e harp of the Son of Jesse. How dreadful is this degeneracy, which shuts ar to the tones of even Heavenly music !

Mighty as is the Spirit of evil in the destruction of the Human Soul, yet is SPIRIT of The LORD Mightier in the Salvation of Them, that freely and fully use Its Grace. Against the fury of Saul's envy and the force of his on was David Preserved by The Watchful GUARDIAN of his Life, Who Slumbereth nor Sleepeth.

Disappointed of his aim in the sudden destruction of a Fellow-Creature, l and faithful as had been his services, Saul meditates further on his hellish ses, and deliberately plans the sacrifice of the Object of his hate. Having in his intention of being himself the Executioner, he enlists the miserable blind Victims of his will to perpetrate the horrid crime, alike regardless of aws of GOD and Man. But again did The SPRIT of The LORD, Which reth what is in Man, Defeat his intent, and by the Dictates of prudential y to Michal, the Consort of David, Save that Life, which was to bring Bless- in its SEED to all Ages of the World.

*"So David fled, and escaped, and came to Samuel to Ramah, and told him all Saul had done to him. And he and Samuel went and dwelt in Naioth."* sam xix, 18. The piety of David's mind led him to the Prophet of The D ; of That LORD, to Whom he ascribed his Salvation ; and with that het he took sweet counsel, and from him perhaps inhaled that spiritual action, which, under the Guidance of The HOLY SPIRIT, shone forth with distinguished lustre in his literary productions, to the delight and improve- of all succeeding times. Perhaps in all the period of David's eventful and ating Life, no portion of it was so delightful to himself as this season of his l intercourse with the holy Prophet. Of that Communion, which awaits the s in the Life to Come, where both Samuel and David, in an infinitely more ified and Glorified State, will be found, was this holy union emblematical. *'And it was told Saul, saying, 'Behold, David is at Naioth in Ramah.' Saul sent Messengers to take David.'*—1 Sam. xix, 19, first part of 20. But the ty of Saul led him to break in upon so sacred an asylum, and, notwithstanding nself had received his Kingdom from the hand of Samuel, and had besought l to turn with him to The LORD, that The LORD'S Anger might be

Turned away from him, yet did he madly dare the imprecations of that same Prophet for the Infliction of DIVINE Chastisement upon his head, choosing rather to risk the immediate Sentence of his Soul to everlasting Punishment, than avoid gratifying his malicious hatred by visiting a temporal death on its Object. But how vain is the help, or the aim, or the device of Man, in a war against the Will of GOD.

△ *"And when they (the Messengers) saw the Company of the Prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as appointed over them, The SPIRIT of GOD was upon the Messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied: and when it was told Saul, he sent other Messengers, and they prophesied likewise. And Saul sent Messengers again the third time, and they prophesied also. Then went he also to Ramah, and came to a great well, that is in Sechu; and he asked and said, 'Where are Samuel and David?' And One said, 'Behold, they be at Naioth in Ramah!' And he went thither to Naioth in Ramah; and The SPIRIT of GOD was upon him also, and he went on, and prophesied, until he came to Naioth in Ramah. And he stripped off his clothes also, and prophesied before Samuel in like manner; and lay down naked all that day and all that night. Wherefore they say, 'Is Saul also among the Prophets?'"*—1 Sam. xix, 20, last part of 24.

It is charity only that never faileth, but prophecies cease, and in their exercise are profitless to their Utterers, if the hearts of those, by whom they are delivered, are not right with The LORD. Balaam took up his parable, and said, *"May I die the death of the Righteous, and may my latter end be like his!"* but he lived not afterwards the life of righteousness, and therefore he could not be expected to repose on the pillow of Spiritual Consolation in the hour of death. *"Prophesying serveth not for them, that believe not,"* as saith St. Paul to the Corinthians, and this whether Hearers or Deliverers of Prophecy; for prophesying, to be available as a demonstration of the inward Working of Grace over the Soul, should be, as prayer, with the Spirit and with the understanding; and thus only is it that *"if we all prophesy One by One (as contemplated by Saint Paul), we may all learn, and may all be comforted."*—1 Cor. xiv, 31.

*"And David fled from Naioth in Ramah, and came and said before Jonathan, 'What have I done? what is mine iniquity? and what is my sin before thy Father, that he seeketh my life?'"*—1 Sam. xx, 1.

In the inscrutable Counsels of The MOST HIGH, doubtless, was it that David left the seemingly unassailable asylum afforded him by the presence of the Prophet, and seized the moment of the King's absence from his Court, to interest his Princely Friend, on his behalf, to renew his efforts at changing in Saul the unhallowed purpose of destruction. It is thus that secondary causes may, with propriety, be resorted to, and it would be even presumptuous not to avail ourselves of them, since it is too much to expect that PROVIDENCE should unnecessarily Interpose by Miracle for our temporal salvation. The consciousness of innocence prompts David to stake his life upon the proof of it. And yet conceiving that Saul could not be actuated to such unremitting and merciless persecution of him without some imaginary cause, David modestly asks, what is the guilt with which the King charges me, and which he deems worthy even of death? *"And he (Jonathan) said unto him, 'GOD Forbid! thou shalt not die: behold, my Father will do nothing either great or small, but that he will shew it me: and why should my Father hide this thing from me? it is not so.' And David swore moreover, and said, 'Thy Father certainly knoweth that I have found grace in thine eyes: and he saith, 'Let not Jonathan know this! lest he be grieved.' But truly as The LORD Liveth, and as thy Soul liveth, there is but a step between me and death.'"*—1 Sam. xx, 2, 3. Possessed, as he conceived himself to be, of the entire confidence of his Father, Jonathan unhesitatingly

exclaimed against the perpetration of an act so hostile to his disposition, so revolting to his feelings: and, considering from the seemingly unreserved intercourse on all matters of general policy and private interest between his Father and himself, that such a step would not be taken without his being previously apprized of and sanctioning it—feeling, moreover, that nothing but the total extinction in his breast of DIVINE Light could make the Father instrumental to his Son's most cherished Friend's destruction, he bursts forth into the short but comprehensive apostrophe, "GOD Forbid!" for he knew that if GOD do Forbid the evil Spirit from taking possession of the Soul of Man, and let His Grace fully Flow in upon it, then, indeed, can no deed of wickedness find the heart prepared to execute it. With such a qualification, and under such an expectation of his Father's consulting him upon the measure, Jonathan might safely say, "Thou shalt not die." Continuing, however, his meditations upon the subject, he conceives that David must have been misinformed, and as every thing in Human policy, as well as religious rule, would operate against the measure, he concludes, "that it is not so," as David had represented. But the persecuted David knew by too sad experience, and unquestionable authority, that so it was, and, therefore, endeavours to awaken the fire of Jonathan's friendship for him by the solemn assurance, that without its exertion, the band of their friendship would be irrecoverably broken by his destruction.

"Then said Jonathan unto David, 'Whatsoever thy Soul desireth, I will even do it for thee.' And David said unto Jonathan, 'Behold, to-morrow is the new moon, and I should not fail to sit with the King at meat; but let me go, that I may hide myself in the field unto the third day at even. If thy Father at all miss me, then say, 'David earnestly asked leave of me, that he might run to Beth-lehem, his City: for there is a yearly sacrifice there for all the Family.' If he say thus, 'It is well,' thy Servant shall have peace: but if he be very wroth, then be sure that evil is determined by him. Therefore thou shalt deal kindly with thy Servant: for thou hast brought thy Servant into a covenant of The LORD with thee. Notwithstanding, if there be in me iniquity, slay me thyself! for why shouldest thou bring me to thy Father?'"—1 Sam. xx, 4. 8. Jonathan does not continue incredulous, but, in all the spirit of the friendship he professed for David, pledges himself, without reserve, to do whatever the fears of David might suggest; thus giving implicit faith to the prudence of his Friend, even at the hazard of incurring his royal Father's displeasure. David had meditated, perhaps, beforehand, on the contrivance that should be resorted to, and the scheme seems equally to have had in view his own protection and his Friend's conviction that his fears were but too strongly founded in truth; and he naturally goes on to excite to a continuance of that active friendship, if the necessity for its exertion should continue; appealing in the piety of his Soul to the All-Seeing Eye of GOD, That witnessed the mutual dedication of their hearts to Each Other in a solemn covenant of love, in subserviency to the Will and in pursuit of the Ways of GOD. And knowing that Jonathan's attachment to him must have arisen from his regarding him as free, not only from the commission but the contemplation of such guilt, he invites Jonathan to sit in judgment on him, and if he should be found to have done iniquity, to mete out himself the measure of the punishment even unto death. For David feared not a righteous judgment, since neither his heart nor his GOD could condemn him as the King's Enemy; but, with the earnestness that is natural in Self-preservation, he deprecates the being given over to the power of his relentless though uninjured Enemy.

"And Jonathan said, 'Far be it from thee! for if I knew certainly that evil were determined by my Father to come upon thee, then would not I tell it thee?' Then said David to Jonathan, 'Who shall tell me? or what, if thy Father answer

*thee roughly?" And Jonathan said unto David, 'Come and let us go out into the field!' And they went out Both of them into the field. And Jonathan said unto David, 'O LORD GOD of Israel, when I have sounded my Father about to-morrow any time, or the third day, and, behold, if there be good toward David, and I then send not unto thee, and shew it thee, The LORD Do So, and much more to Jonathan! But if it please my Father to do thee evil, then I will shew it thee and send thee away, that thou mayest go in peace! and The LORD Be with thee, as He hath Been with my Father: and thou shalt not only while yet I live shew me the Kindness of The LORD, that I die not: but also thou shalt not cut off thy kindness from my House for ever; no, not when The LORD hath Cut off the Enemies of David every One from the face of the Earth.' So Jonathan made a Covenant with the House of David, saying, 'Let The LORD even Require it at the hand of David's Enemies!' And Jonathan caused David to swear again, because he loved him; for he loved him as he loved his own Soul."—1 Sam. xx, 9. 17.*

In the warmth of friendship, and under a conviction of its operating influence on his heart, Jonathan, in effect, prays that no such evil may befall David: and goes on to ask, in all the condescension of ingenuous feeling, if David could suppose that he would keep him in ignorance of what so vitally affected him, were David's suspicions just, and had Jonathan been otherwise than through him made acquainted with the cause. In the considerateness of real regard and as a further proof of the strength of his love for David, Jonathan forbears explaining his scheme of prevention in the house, lest, perhaps, the ears of Others, unfriendly to David's peace, should bear tidings of it to Saul and thwart the project. He adjourns, therefore, with him to a field, and before the Ear and under the Eye of HEAVEN alone, Whose Attention and Observation he piously invokes, vows that he will deal faithfully with David; and having adopted the plan suggested by David, acquaint him early and fully of the result; calling down the Vengeance of HEAVEN on his own head, if he fail; and contemplating the possibility of a separation between them, should the displeasure manifested by the King confirm the fears of David, without asking another interview which might be fatal to his peace (an object which Jonathan proves to have at heart), he supplicates That Blessing,—than which Friendship cannot ask a greater,—the Visitation of DIVINE Protection and Favour on the head of David, equal in measure to That Dealt out to Jonathan's Father; though, doubtless, expecting, though not expressing, that a more pious use would be made of It in the one case, than unfortunately had been in the other. And then, in the spirit of Prophecy, looking into the events of future times, in pious submission to the Will of GOD, and in acknowledgment that His Promise never Faileth, he avails himself of the favourable opportunity, and foreknowing or fully believing that in the Acceptable Time of The LORD David would be highly Exalted, Jonathan pre-engages the employment of that power to the protection of his own life and the lives of his Offspring in future ages; binding him thereto by a solemn covenant, not unnatural, however unnecessary it might have been from such a Character as David. It is hardly in words to convey more briefly and, at the same time, more forcibly the power of David's influence over the heart of Jonathan than these, a power springing, evidently, from the excellence of David's qualities and the intrinsic merit of his actions.

△ *"Then Jonathan said to David, 'To-morrow is the new moon; and thou shalt be missed, because thy seat will be empty: and when thou hast stayed three days, then thou shalt go down quickly, and come to the place where thou didst hide thyself, when the business was in hand, and shalt remain by the stone Ezel: and I will shoot three arrows on the side thereof, as though I shot at a mark: and, behold, I will send a Lad, saying, 'Go, find out the arrows!' If I expressly say unto the*

*Lad, 'Behold, the arrows are on this side of thee, take them!' then come thou! for there is peace to thee; and no hurt; as The LORD Liveth. But if I say thus unto the young Man, 'Behold, the arrows are beyond thee!' go thy way! for The LORD hath Sent thee away. And as touching the matter, which thou and I have spoken of, behold, The LORD Be between thee and me for ever!'—1 Sam. xx, 18. 23.*

With all the considerateness of the deepest counsel, and with all the anxiety of the sincerest affection, and with all the condescension of a mind labouring to do good, Jonathan thus organizes a plan of operations by which, without the hazard of an exposure of his Friend by a direct conference between them, the mind of David might be sufficiently informed of what related to or threatened his peace; whilst his body was reserved in concealment. And in the conditional farewell that Jonathan takes of him, he again dwells on the covenant that had been made between them, thereby, indirectly, and with all the delicacy of exalted feeling, consoling the spirit of David with the assurance that his dearest Friend was not faithless, but believing that The LORD of All Might was his PROTECTOR, and the word which the Prophet Samuel had spoken concerning him would surely come to pass,—a source of consolation than which nothing was more likely to support David under every trial and difficulty, and to bring him peace even amidst persecution.

*"So David hid himself in the field: and when the new moon was come, the King sat him down to eat meat; and the King sat upon his seat as at other times, even upon a seat by the wall. And Jonathan arose, and Abner sat by Saul's side, and David's place was empty. Nevertheless Saul spake not any thing that day; for he thought 'Something hath befallen him, he is not clean; surely he is not clean.'"*—1 Sam. xx, 24. 26. David yielded, and justly so, his confidence to Jonathan, and did as he directed: how sweet and salutary is the counsel of pious Friendship! how studiously, therefore, should it be cultivated! how much should it be longed after! For Saul, bent on the fiend-like and hell-directed purpose of his malignant heart, though with all his wonted energy and circumspection about him, takes his accustomed seat in the celebration of a solemn festival to The LORD, but, alas, with a mind how little congenial with such a service. From the absence of David he is led to conclude that David was outwardly unclean, and, therefore, unfitted for attendance at the Sacrifice; the Levitical law prescribing that "*the Soul that should touch any unclean thing, and eat of the flesh of the Sacrifice of peace-offerings, which pertain unto The LORD, even that Soul should be cut off from His People*" (Lev. vii, 21): and various causes of bodily uncleanness are enumerated, which any One suffering is not, though "*he bathe himself in water, absolved from until the even*"—Lev. xv, 5, &c. But what a mockery of The DIVINE Law, what blasphemy against The HOLY GHOST was this admission by Saul of the outward and ceremonial rite as respected David, and his own dreadful neglect of that cleanness of his own heart on the same solemn occasion, without which, in an infinite degree less, could he hope to render an acceptable Sacrifice to GOD! This, indeed, should he have done, and not have left the other undone: but what a miserable Slave to weakness, and folly, and absurdity, and stupidity, and grossest darkness does the mind of Man become when it refuses the Light of DIVINE Truth for its Guide, preferring darkness to light; but this it does, only because its deeds are evil intended.


*"And it came to pass on the morrow, which was the second day of the month, that David's place was empty; and Saul said unto Jonathan, his Son, 'Wherefore cometh not the Son of Jesse to meat, neither yesterday nor to-day?' And Jonathan answered Saul, 'David earnestly asked leave of me to go to Beth-lehem: and he said, 'Let me go, I pray thee: for our Family hath a sacrifice in the City: and my Brother, he hath commanded me to be there; and now, if I have found favour in thine eyes, let me*



*get away, I pray thee, and see my Brethren!* Therefore he cometh not unto the King's table.' Then Saul's anger was kindled against Jonathan, and he said unto him, 'Thou Son of the perverse rebellious Woman, do not I know that thou hast chosen the Son of Jesse to thine own confusion, and unto the confusion of thy Mother's nakedness? for as long as the Son of Jesse liveth upon the ground, thou shalt not be established, nor thy Kingdom, Wherefore now send and fetch him unto me! for he shall surely die.' And Jonathan answered Saul, his Father, and said unto him, 'Wherefore shall he be slain? What hath he done?' And Saul cast a javelin at him to smite him: whereby Jonathan knew that it was determined of his Father to slay David."—1 Sam. xx, 27, 33.

The Feast of the New Moon was Ordained by the Mosaical Institution for "a Burnt Offering of sweet savour, a Sacrifice made by fire unto The LORD."—Num. xxviii, 13. And Saul could not but have known, had he consulted his own conscience, that vain must be the Sacrifice, when the heart was destitute of devotion and DIVINE Grace—nay it must be, as the Prophet Isaiah afterwards proclaimed it to be (ch. 1, 13 to 15), "an abomination unto The LORD, and that the New Moons and appointed Feasts His SOUL Hateth, when the hands of the Offerer are full of blood." Saul had passed a day in the celebration of this Festival, but with a Soul so little inwardly harmonizing with the outward ceremony, that the destruction of David seems to have been the only object of his thoughts. Had he but sought for the Light of Truth, instead of labouring to find a reason for David's absence, in that of his uncleanness, he would himself have retired from the Solemnity, and "*washed himself and made himself clean, by putting away the evil of his doings from before The LORD'S Eyes; by ceasing to do evil and learning to do well.*"—Is. i, 16, 17. And this is an instance, which forcibly exposes the insufficiency of an approach to The LORD with the lips, even in His Holy Temple, if the heart be not right with Him;—That not every One that saith "LORD, LORD," though in the House of GOD, shall be Saved; but he, that doeth the Will of The LORD, Which is in Heaven. The language and the manner of Saul's first inquiry after David, of Jonathan, were those of gentleness and seeming affection—nothing that could in themselves have awakened suspicion in the mind of Jonathan, and which, on the contrary, had not distrust been before planted there, might have made Jonathan, however, innocently, accessory to the snare that was laid for the destruction of him whom he "loved as his own Soul:" how doubly deep did this render the dye of Saul's iniquity! True to his promise, Jonathan gives, not only in substance, but in spirit, the answer that had been previously agreed upon, extending it with additional circumstances, as the countenance of Saul, changing with the rising passion, foretold the anger that was raging within him at the disappointment of his purpose. This act of Jonathan, excusable and even amiable as it may seem, and still more the suggestion of it by David, who had tasted of the Goodness and Protection of The LORD, must not, perhaps, be called in for an example, since it is not right to do evil that good may ensue—and here a departure from the truth, was made by Man the foundation of Salvation from the power of the Spirit of evil; but such are the miserable subterfuges of Human policy when Men trust to their own devices, and seek not by prayer the Guidance of The HOLY SPIRIT. Even David, the "Man after GOD'S Own Heart," and Peter, for whom CHRIST Especially Interceded by Prayer to The FATHER, were not exempt from the influence of such weakness, when resting upon their own fancied sufficiency and strength. Let us take heed, lest whilst thinking we stand by the power of our own counsel, we fall into that error, which as a gulph will swallow up both Soul and body in Hell. Jonathan, knowing the respect that was due from David to his King, knew also that Saul, the Anointed of The

ORD, could not but acknowledge that higher reverence was due from him to the KING of Kings, if the heart of Saul were but right within him; but to render David's loyalty less questionable, Jonathan exhibits him as paying all the deference to his Earthly Monarch, that in reason could be expected from him, in asking of the Prime Minister, as it were, of his Kingdom, and the Chief Director of his Government, the Son of his bosom and the Heir Apparent of his throne, permission to absent himself upon so justifiable an occasion; and in the spirit of the truest friendship, if blame could anywhere attach, Jonathan thus nobly and voluntarily takes it upon himself. So intoxicating, however, is passion, that it often destroys the very purpose which he, who suffers himself to be its victim, has next at heart. Saul had greater love for no Man than for Jonathan; it was the reservation of the Kingdom for him, in the ordinary line of Succession, that Saul most anxiously wished, and to give effect to that wish, he hesitated not at endeavouring to imbrue his hands in the blood of One, who under the Grace of HEAVEN, had been the Instrument of Salvation to him, his Kingdom, and his People: But disappointed of the object of removing his Son's Rival, though for a time only, as he must have conceived, he now directs his rage against this very Son himself, and first pouring forth violent invectives against him, alike cruel and offensive from their injustice and publicity, involving, at the same time, the character of One so tenderly dear to Jonathan as her, whose womb had borne him, whose care had nursed, and whose fondness had continually hung over him. But though the salvation of his Mother and himself were, however inconsistently, urged upon Jonathan as dependant upon the destruction of David, and Jonathan had witnessed the fierce bent of Saul's mind against David, yet did he not cease, amidst so much discouragement, to intercede for One, whom he knew to be faithful and loyal, though so persecuted; and supported by the pillar of a righteous conscience, he boldly challenges the King before his People to declare the grounds of his accusation against David, though, doubtless, believing him at the same time utterly incapable of substantiating any. As too often is the case, where reason fails, force is resorted to: in the phrenzy of his fury Saul now seeks that life, for the preservation of which, more than for anything else, he had sought the life of Another. Into what horrible excesses is it thus seen that passion betrays us! if we yield to it, it so hurries us on from one indiscretion, and folly, and crime to another, that we in letter as in spirit eat our own flesh. With what earnestness, therefore, should we guard against its first impulses, whether in the shape of jealousy, avarice, lust, revenge, or otherwise, seizing it on its approach, ere it has fully fastened upon us, and using, like Saul, though in an opposite spirit, a javelin to pierce it to the wall, and rid ourselves of so dangerous and destructive an Enemy, who would rob us of our inheritance in the Kingdom of Heaven.

*"So Jonathan arose from the table in fierce anger, and did eat no meat the second day of the month: for he was grieved for David, because his Father had done him shame."*—1 Sam. xx, 34. 

Fierce as was the anger of Jonathan, yet did it not impel him to the commission of sin. His bravery was indisputable—his wisdom was acknowledged even by the King himself; but he neither put forth the one, nor exercised the other for any purpose of his Father's humiliation. He soon forgot the injustice practised towards himself in the depth of his sorrow for the unmerited persecution and imminent danger of his Friend. Instead of returning javelin for javelin: or convening a Council of the Kingdom to deliberate on the King's conduct, though this might have been the act of the second day, and might seem justified by an imperious necessity, under which Kings are subjected to responsibility, he withdrew from the sumptuous entertainment at which as to a solemn

festival he had been invited, and passed the day in abstinence and contemplation, sorrowing, doubtless, for a Father's folly, but most of all for the impending fate of an estimable Man and an adopted Brother.

*"And it came to pass in the morning, that Jonathan went out into the field at the time appointed with David, and a little Lad with him: and he said unto his Lad, 'Run, find out now the arrows which I shoot!' And as the Lad ran, he shot an arrow beyond him. And when the Lad was come to the place of the arrow, which Jonathan had shot, Jonathan cried after the Lad, and said, 'Is not the arrow beyond thee?' And Jonathan cried after the Lad, 'Make speed, haste, stay not!' And Jonathan's Lad gathered up the arrows and came to his Master. But the Lad knew not anything: only Jonathan and David knew the matter. And Jonathan gave his artillery unto his Lad, and said unto him, 'Go, carry them to the City!'"*—1 Sam. xx, 35, 40.


Notwithstanding the agitation which the unexpected violence and unnatural conduct of Saul must necessarily have produced in the mind of Jonathan, and the duties which Self-preservation would dictate amidst the dangers that threatened his own life, Jonathan yet found room to treasure in his memory the peculiar plan with all its circumstances of minuteness, which had been mutually settled to favour the escape of David: withholding from him, in the spirit of the most exalted delicacy of feeling, even the knowledge of the dangers that beset his own paths, from his adherence to the interest of his Friend.

*"And as soon as the Lad was gone, David arose out of a place towards the south, and fell on his face to the ground, and bowed himself three times: and they kissed One Another, and wept One with Another, until David exceeded. And Jonathan said to David, 'Go in peace! forasmuch as we have sworn Both of us in the Name of The LORD, saying, 'The LORD Be between me and thee, and between my Seed and thy Seed for ever!' And he arose and departed; and Jonathan went into the City."—1 Sam. xx, 41, 42.*

Short as is this description of so interesting and affecting an interview between two such Friends, at a season so mutually afflictive, and under feelings withal of resignation to the Will, and of confidence in the Word of GOD, yet many are the sources of reflection to which it is calculated to give rise in order to fill up the mere outline thus furnished us. It may be objected to David that his reverence to Jonathan was too abject and almost approaching to idolatry; but something of deference was due to the difference of station as sanctioned by municipal regulations or usage, but still more was due from a persecuted Subject to his Prince, who had thus graciously and generously stepped forward to redeem him from destruction: and gratitude to Man is not incompatible with the sense of higher obligation owing by us to The DEITY: whatever measure of it could be dealt out, should seem to such an occasion applicable, and even a little exceeding might be visited with a merciful judgment; but the effects of it on the mind of him, to whom it was addressed, may form some rule whereby to estimate it. Jonathan did not regard it as too servile, or he probably would have indicated displeasure at it; but, at the same time he was not inflated by it, for we see him still having The LORD, as above All and Over All, continually in view, and reviving in David's mind, in the same delicate and indirect way, the recollection of The DIVINE Promise in his favour, by referring to and virtually renewing the solemn compact of mutual love that had been made between them with reference to the change, that through faith in the Promises of GOD, Jonathan doubted not would, in the Appointed Season, come to pass in David's favour; than which nothing could be more calculated to administer consolation and support amidst the trials and distresses that then pressed upon him. And how must the agonies of David have been alleviated by the endearing attentions and Brotherly

plings of his religious Friend! There must have been sensations of pleasure mingled with the pain he felt at being driven from all terrestrial Objects dear to him, which the imagination, much less the pen, is unequal to describe. Such are the feelings of the Christian on being severed, by the visitation of Death, from the Friend whom he may have loved as his own Soul, with whom he may have taken sweet counsel, and walked to the House of The LORD together, when, on the contrary, left to struggle alone in the sea of trouble and in the fire of spiritual trial and temptation; but reflection soon comes to his aid and assures him that he is not alone, but that The FATHER, The SON, and The HOLY GHOST are Unitedly with him, to Strengthen him under Human firmity, to Uphold him in the hour of adversity, and in the season of affliction Give him Succour and Consolation.

Having fulfilled to the utmost, not only the letter, but the spirit of his obligation, Jonathan returns with the fortitude of an approving conscience; indifferent, perhaps, to the fate that might await himself from any further display of a royal displeasure; or feeling in the fulness of faith, that as all Power, both in Heaven and Earth, Belongeth to GOD, so could not even the King hurt a hair of his head, unless it were Given him so to do from Above.

"Then came David to Nob, to Ahimelech the Priest: and Ahimelech was raid at the meeting of David, and said unto him, 'Why art thou alone, and no man with thee?' And David said unto Ahimelech, the Priest, 'The King hath commanded me a business, and hath said unto me, 'Let no Man know anything of the business whereabout I send thee, and what I have commanded thee!' and I have appointed my Servants to such and such a place. Now, therefore, what is under mine hand? give me five loaves of bread in mine hand, or what there is present!' And the Priest answered David, and said, 'There is no common bread under mine hand, but there is hallowed bread: if the young Men have kept themselves at least from Women.' And David answered the Priest, and said unto him, 'Of a truth women have been kept from us about these three days, since I came out, and the vessels of the young Men are holy; and the bread is in a manner common, yea, though it were sanctified this day in the vessel.' So the Priest gave him hallowed bread; for there was no bread there but the shew bread, that was taken from before the LORD, to put hot bread in the day when it was taken away. Now a certain man of the Servants of Saul was there that day, detained before The LORD; and his name was Doeg, an Edomite, the chiefest of the Herdmen, that belonged to the king. And David said unto Ahimelech, 'And is there not here under thine hand ear of sword? for I have neither brought my sword nor my weapons with me, because the King's business required haste.' And the Priest said, 'The sword of Goliath, the Philistine, whom thou slewest in the valley of Elah, behold, it is here wrapped in a cloth behind the Ephod: if thou wilt take that, take it! for there is no other, save that here.' And David said, 'There is none like that, give it me!'" — Sam. xxi, 1. 9.

This incident in the life of David, of taking the shew bread, was Acknowledged by our SAVIOUR Himself, and Adduced by analogy as a justification of his Own Disciples before the Pharisees for plucking the ears of corn to satisfy their hunger, as they passed through some corn fields on a sabbath day, Adding, for *The SON of Man is LORD even of the Sabbath Day*," thereby intimating, at when acting in His Presence or in His Service for purposes of absolute necessity, the strict letter of the ceremonial Law may occasionally be departed from without offence in the Sight of GOD; "and *Who art thou, O Man, that dost Another, when CHRIST, The JUDGE of all Men, hath Suffered him to be free*."—(See Matt. xii, 1 to 8; Mark ii, 23 to 28; and Luke vi, 1 to 5.) The assertion of a falsehood before the Priest of The MOST HIGH, and in the

very House of GOD, is a fearful subject for contemplation ; but the narrative of it here is irresistibly corroborative of the general truth of David's history, since a false Prophet or Scribe would have veiled this feature in David's character ; but here everything is laid open as faithfully as in a mirror, and we see from thence that the greatest of Men, when left to themselves, or not following the Unerring Guidance of the Voice of DIVINE Truth, are poor, and helpless, and miserable Sinners, preferring darkness to light ; clinging to this precarious state of existence, and almost indifferent about the other ; as if this were to know no end, and the other be but the obtruding presence of a moment. But thanks be to GOD, Who is not Extreme to Mark what is done amiss ; Who having Brought Light into the World, first by the Inspiration of His HOLY SPIRIT, and afterwards by the Presence of His Only and HOLY SON, is Ready to Lead us from the error of our ways, if we will but seek unto Him, and walk as in His Sight and in the confidence of His Protection. To David, the loss of his life, when persecuted for righteousness sake, would have been the fulness of blessedness—a transition from the unsatisfying state of this World, to the Glories of Immortality in the Visual Presence of GOD and of His Angels. David had boldly risked that life in his combat with Goliath, he had offered to surrender it to the sword of Jonathan, and why he should submit to falsehood as a means of preserving it against One not more powerful than Goliath, and equally under the controul of OMNIPOTENCE, it is hard to understand ; but this shows that the wise Man is not himself, or in the same disposition, at all times ; and it becomes us, therefore, in distrust of our own minds, which are so unstable, and so often influenced by unworthy passions and prejudices, to seek That Mind, Which was in CHRIST JESUS ; that, having a reverential fear of GOD at all times operating as the predominant principle of our hearts, we may not fear what Man can do unto us.

△ *“And David arose, and fled that day for fear of Saul, and went to Achish, the King of Gath : and the Servants of Achish said unto him, ‘Is not this David, the King of the Land? did they not sing One to Another of him in dances, saying, ‘Saul hath slain his Thousands and David his Ten Thousands?’ And David laid up these words in his heart, and was sore afraid of Achish, the King of Gath, and he changed his behaviour before them, and feigned himself mad in their hands, and scrambled on the doors of the gate, and let his spittle fall down upon his beard. Then said Achish unto his Servants, ‘Lo, ye see the Man is mad : wherefore then have ye brought him to me? Have I need of mad Men, that ye have brought this Fellow to play the mad Man in my presence? shall this Fellow come into my house?’ David therefore departed thence and escaped to the cave Adullam.”—1 Sam. xxi, 10. 15., xxii, part of verse 1.*

How truly is the saying, that “the Children of this World are in their generation wiser than the Children of Light,” exemplified in this line of conduct adopted by David. Had he resigned himself to the Guidance of The HOLY SPIRIT, his course would have been plain, and without subtilty of judgment, for the Secret of The LORD is with them that fear Him ; but having given up himself to his own inventions in the spirit of a Child of this World, it cannot be denied that they displayed much ingenuity, and were peculiarly adapted to their end. But to what a state of abjectness and degradation may this love of life and desire for it at all hazards impel us ; and how awful would have been the visitation of death even to the holy David, had it come upon him in the moment of such practised deceit ! We are thus doubly instructed by David's example to shun the evil, and tread the good way ; to put our confidence only, and at all times, in GOD against our open Enemies, and not to withdraw it when any other perils may, at any future time, surround us ; or if, in the prevalence of Human infirmity, we should abandon it, and have done so for a season, like David to

make haste and tarry not, but to return again to our LORD, that He may Have Mercy upon us, and to our GOD, that He may abundantly Pardon us.

*"And when his Brethren and all his Father's House heard it, they went down thither to him: and every One that was in distress, and every One that was in debt, and every One that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became a Captain over them: and there were with him about four hundred Men."*

—1 Sam. xxii, part of 1 and 2.

Notwithstanding the great reversal of his fortunes, Those who could best appreciate the merits of David, did not, amidst the royal persecution of him, desert him; but his nearest Kinsfolk, at the hazard of being overwhelmed in the same tyrannical edict of destruction, sought after him sorrowing, and at length, as the reward of their diligence, found the lost sheep, and had joy in his presence; but it was a joy clouded by the conviction, that danger still hung suspended over him; and, indeed, scarcely the most distant prospect of Human deliverance could have arisen to their view. How changed is now his condition—from the softness of a Court, from having Armies at his bidding, and the applause of Multitudes, acclaiming him more worthy than their King as a warrior, and spreading the fame of his wisdom as a Judge, we see heaped upon his own unmerited misfortunes the wants and necessities of Others, whether the effect of inevitable calamities, or produced by their own folly or injustice. But though sunk to so low an ebb of wretchedness himself, the resources of his mind and the integrity of his heart gave David, by universal acknowledgment, the title to precedence amongst these variously circumstanced Followers.

*"And David went thence to Mizpeh of Moab, and he said unto the King of Moab, 'Let my Father and my Mother, I pray thee, come forth, and be with you! till I know what GOD will Do for me:' And he brought them before the King of Moab: and they dwelt with him all the while that David was in the hold."*—1 Sam. xxii, 3, 4.

The Nearest Relatives of David, except his Wife, fled to him, doubtless apprehensive that Saul would vent his wrath upon them and to their destruction, if remaining within his power: and with all the tenderness of filial affection and feeling, David, unwilling that his Father and his Mother should be exposed to such a life of peril as had been allotted to himself, and be reduced to a station so destitute of those comforts they had been accustomed to receive (and which their advancing years rendered additionally necessary), sought for them an asylum of security and peace in the neighbouring Nation of the Moabites, whose King, though not a worshipper of The True GOD, had more of humanity in his nature than the King of Israel, though that King had been anointed by the Prophet of The LORD, had attended and participated in the ceremonial rites of the Church of The MOST HIGH; but it is not the blood of bulls and of goats, and an observance of outward forms of religion, that can be Acceptable before The LORD, where there is not a corresponding obedience and devotion of the heart; and truly enviable is the lot of the Heathen, who hath not known GOD, but follows with faithfulness the law of his conscience, studious of doing good, and who would be a Worshipper in spirit and in truth, if the Light of Revelation had been Visited upon him; when compared with the nominal Servant of The MOST HIGH, the *Professor* of His faith, but the Violator of His Laws. As between this Israelite and this Heathen, so is the comparison between ignorance and knowledge amongst different members of any variety of Communities, or of the same Communion in the Judgment of The KING of Kings; and the poor untutored Savage is nearer to the Kingdom of Heaven, if he keep his heart from thinking and his hand from doing evil, than the chief Minister of CHRIST'S Religion upon Earth, if the Religion of CHRIST animate not his bosom. Amidst

occasional exercises of his free will in following his own inventions for his personal safety, we again see David in spirit resigning himself to The LORD of Life and Light and all Things, waiting with patience the Adoption, to wit, the Redemption of his body; thereby indirectly communicating the most exalted consolation to his Parents on their further separation from him, and from their native soil, to sojourn in a strange and idolatrous Land, as giving them the assurance that he had faith in the Promises of GOD, and doubted not that in GOD'S Appointed Season Salvation would come unto his House.

*"And the Prophet Gad said unto David, 'Abide not in the hold; depart, and get thee into the Land of Judah.' Then David departed, and came into the Forest of Hareth."*—1 Sam. xxii, 5.

Even in a desert and in a cave, amongst them whose follies and imprudencies had made them amenable to the outraged justice of their Country, GOD, for the sake of David, left not Himself without a Witness, and Withheld not from David His Merciful Guidance, but through the Inspiration of The HOLY SPIRIT Operating on the mind of a Fellow-Mortal with David, Imparted to him such Counsel as was profitable towards his temporal good; and David was not unmindful of the Word, but obeyed The SPIRIT of Truth in the spirit of humility and devotion. The Way wherein we should All go, and the Land to which we should All direct our steps, are clearly Pointed out to us by DIVINE Revelation. May, therefore, this act of David, in implicitly obeying The DIVINE Injunction, be adopted by us as an example to go when The LORD Calleth to us, and to take the Way that He Graciously Pointeth out!

△ *"When Saul heard that David was discovered, and the Men that were with him (now Saul abode in Gibeah under a tree in Ramah, having his spear in his hand, and all his Servants were standing about him): then Saul said unto his Servants that stood about him, 'Hear now, ye Benjamites! Will the Son of Jesse give every One of you fields and vineyards, and make you all Captains of Thousands, and Captains of Hundreds; that All of you have conspired against me; and there is None that sheweth me that my Son hath made a league with the Son of Jesse, and there is None of you that is sorry for me, or sheweth unto me that my Son hath stirred up my Servant against me, to lie in wait, as at this day?'"*—1 Sam. xxii, 6. 8.

Deceiving himself, Saul deceived Others also; for neither was Jonathan leaguering for any purpose hostile to his Father's real interest, nor was David unfriendly to his Master's government,—their own safety being at stake, they therefore only shunned the presence of so unnatural a Father, and so blood-thirsty and tyrannical a King: but Saul chose to put a different construction upon their conduct to answer his diabolical purpose, and knowing, in the subtilty of an evil mind, how essential it was to work upon the passions of his People in order to make them instrumental to his object, he artfully paints to them his loving Son as a Rebel to his House, and his faithful Son in Law as a Rival for his Empire. Through what a labyrinth of despicable conduct, ultimately as hateful to ourselves as to Others, does the indulgence of one criminal passion often lead us; and how does it tend to involve Others in unhappiness by making them, through ignorance, Accessories to guilty purposes! *"Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil!"* thus *"sinning as it were with a cart rope,"* by dragging Others into the train of their abominable courses.

*"Then answered Doeg, the Edomite, which was set over the Servants of Saul, and said, 'I saw the Son of Jesse coming to Nob, to Ahimelech, the Son of Ahitub: and he inquired of The LORD for him; and gave him victuals, and gave him the sword of Goliath, the Philistine.' Then the King sent to call Ahimelech, the Priest, the Son of Ahitub, and all his Father's House, the Priests that were in Nob: and they came all of them to the King. And Saul said, 'Hear now, thou Son of*

*Ahitub !' And he answered, 'Here I am, my Lord !' And Saul said unto him, 'Why have ye conspired against me, thou and the Son of Jesse, in that thou hast given him bread, and a sword, and hast inquired of GOD for him, that he should rise against me, to lie in wait, as at this day ?' Then Ahimelech answered the King, and said, 'And who is so faithful among all thy Servants, as David, which is the King's Son in law ; and goeth at thy bidding, and is honourable in thine House ? Did I then begin to inquire of GOD for him ? be it far from me ! Let not the King impute anything unto his Servant, nor to all the House of my Father ! for thy Servant knew nothing of all this, less or more.'*"—1 Sam. xxii, 9. 15.

How liable are the Best of Men to have their best motives misconstrued ! Ahimelech had thought and meant to have furthered the purpose of the King, and would not, perhaps, for any less object, have yielded to David's application, notwithstanding the estimation in which he held him. But our consolation is that Man's judgment is not the final judgment ; and that, though he may kill the body, he cannot destroy the Soul, nor rob it in the Life to Come of its Everlasting Rest. The conclusion drawn by Doeg was not unnatural, if he did not hear what passed between David and Ahimelech, though the greater probability is that he did, from the very nature of the application, and still more from the sanguinary disposition we shall shortly see him exhibit, and from the jealousy he might entertain as a Heathen, and, therefore, seek the destruction of the Israelitish Priesthood. But had not the persecuting spirit of Saul extinguished, with reference to David, all disposition in him to discriminate between right and wrong, in order that he might avoid the awful responsibility of an unrighteous judgment, he would have checked at once the positive belief of Doeg's statement, forbearing till he had heard the defence of the Accused, who, as the Servants and special Ministers of The MOST HIGH, The GOD of all Purity and Holiness, were assuredly not the less entitled to credit for purity of motive, than an Enemy to their faith and an Idolater. Ahimelech came in all the consciousness of innocence, and, though most unexpectedly himself accused, yet seeing with an eagle's eye that the impulse which gave to all the workings of Saul's mind a wrong direction, was the unjust estimate he had formed of the character and principles of David, he, without stopping in the first instance to offer a vindication of himself, breaks out into a dignified and generous assertion of the undervalued merit and mistaken character of David, bearing testimony to his high worth at every hazard of the King's displeasure, and as became a Minister of truth ; and then contents himself with a mere declaration of his own guiltlessness, without laying claim to the praise that was rather due to him for having, in intention at least, gone every length that his sacred Office would, without offence to The KING of Kings, admit of, for the supposed advancement of the Royal cause.

*"And the King said, 'Thou shalt surely die, Ahimelech, thou and all thy Father's House !' And the King said unto the Footmen that stood about him, 'Turn and slay the Priests of The LORD ! because their hand also is with David ; and because they knew when he fled, and did not shew it to me.' But the Servants of the King would not put forth their hand to fall upon the Priests of The LORD. And the King said to Doeg, 'Turn thou, and fall upon the Priests !' And Doeg, the Edomite, turned, and he fell upon the Priests, and slew on that day fourscore and five Persons, that did wear a linen Ephod. And Nob, the City of the Priests, smote he with the edge of the sword, both Men and Women, Children and Sucklings, and oxen, and asses, and sheep, with the edge of the sword."*—1 Sam. xxii, 16. 19.

To war against HEAVEN Itself, as it were, is the mind of Saul at last brought. From one evil to another, and another, and another of greater, and still greater magnitude is thus the Soul of Man drawn on, when it rejects the



Guidance of The HOLY SPIRIT, and at all hazards seeks to gratify its own vicious propensities. Saul is now numbered with the Dead; and in the Latter Day when he shall stand before his GOD in Judgment, can it be, though once the Anointed of The LORD, that he should not then be numbered with the Transgressors, and have the Sentence of everlasting excommunication from the Favour of The ALMIGHTY Pronounced against him? For how could a Soul so actuated as his was, in the only season of probation allotted him, be fit to hold communion with the pure Spirits of Heaven? Not more opposite would light be from darkness; and into everlasting darkness and despair, with the evil Spirit from The LORD continually upon it, is it to be apprehended that the Soul of Saul, and of Such as are like-minded with him, will then irreversibly be Cast. For though peculiar, in a temporal sense, as was the condition of Saul, comparatively with the majority of Mankind (as being Elected to the high Office of an Earthly King, and that by the Avowed Intercession of GOD Himself, being clothed with all the power that belongs to Majesty, and set over the Chosen People of The MOST HIGH), yet, in a spiritual sense, the condition of every One, to whom the Grace of The ALMIGHTY is freely Offered to make us Spiritual Kings and Priests, and to give us within our own breasts the Kingdom of Heaven, is far from being dissimilar, and the same awful responsibility and danger await us, if we use such power unworthily, yielding to the dictates of our own evil lusts and desires, and, like the spiritually proud Israelites of old, putting from us the pure Gospel of Truth, and crucifying with them The Spiritual DAVID, The LORD of Life, The SAVIOUR of our Israel. A more fell Executioner of a foul purpose could not Saul have selected than this Edomite, who, with the ingratitude of a serpent, thus stung most vitally yet subtilly the peace of the Master, that thus cherished him. How much does it behove us to be careful, when delegating power, not to put any confidence in Man, who hath not the fear of The LORD before his eyes? The true Servants of Saul, who were willing to obey him even unto the death in a legitimate cause, and would have dared every danger in opposing his real Enemies, whether from within or from without his Kingdom, could not be brought to raise their hand against The MOST HIGH. Silent and respectful as was the reproof, yet on a Soul so callous to right feeling as that of Saul, its hoped for effect was lost, and the relentless and cruel Spirit of a Heathen was called up to send forth upon the People, who were even ignorant of the charge, and the Priests who were not less innocent of the commission of the offence complained of, the sword and firebrand of utter extermination. How will the blood of these Martyrs and Saints, of the Poor and the Fatherless, the Widow and the Orphan, cry out for Judgment on such foul and multitudinous murders! Let us take care that we slay not the pure Graces of The HOLY SPIRIT within us, infinitely more worthy as They are to be cherished, lest we also fall into the same Condemnation!

△ *"And One of the Sons of Ahimelech, the Son of Ahitub, named Abiathar, escaped, and fled after David. And Abiathar shewed David, that Saul had slain The LORD'S Priests. And David said unto Abiathar, 'I knew it that day, when Doeg, the Edomite was there, that he would surely tell Saul. I have occasioned the death of all the Persons of thy Father's House! Abide thou with me; fear not! for he, that seeketh my life, seeketh thy life; but with me thou shalt be in safeguard.'"*  
—1 Sam. xxii, 20. 23.

Whatever forebodings of the effect of Saul's disappointment in his hope of overtaking David, and of the cause of it being betrayed, and that with a false colouring, by Doeg, might have been in David's mind, we are disarmed in a great measure of any disposition severely to reflect upon him for that, as well as for the positive offence of his departure from truth in his dealings with Ahimelech,

since he here makes so ready and candid an avowal of himself being the cause of the fatal consequences that attended them. David was not more than Man, and infirmities chequered with much of excellence his character. The fury of the persecution, that raged so unjustifiably (and to his mind, perhaps, unaccountably) against him, drove him to acts, that in other circumstances, he would probably have revolted at. But how deep soever was his offence, when it is brought to his remembrance we find him confessing faithfully his sin, and sorrowing with a godly sorrow for its commission. It is this mind that is peculiarly Acceptable to GOD, and through the abundance of His Mercy (DIVINE Justice being Satisfied by the Sufferings of His SON, Operating by Relation as effectually before as after His Incarnation) "*our sins, though they be as scarlet (if we repent of them like David), shall be whiter than snow.*" The Fulness of the Gospel Light might lead a Christian Sinner, having offended like David, to surrender himself up to his implacable Enemy, lest as great or even a worse evil should overtake Others, who might, with equal innocence, suffer in his cause: knowing that without DIVINE Permission neither a Doeg nor a Saul could hurt a hair of his head. But the example of confession, set us by David, teaches us one of the most important exercises of the heart in its pursuit of Heavenly Peace.

The conduct of the Son of Ahimelech, bereaved as he was of a home, and of all that rendered home dear to him, and himself holding his life in jeopardy, and all this as the effect of David's conduct, and as the consequence of a seeming partiality for him, yet instead of betraying David to Saul, which would at least have brought unto him pardon and reconciliation from Saul, exhibits such confidence in David, that he unhesitatingly places himself under his protection, hoping and trusting that The LORD, in His Appointed Season, would Be on his side, and turn their respective sorrows, deep and enlarged as they then were, into that joy which no Man taketh away.

"*Then they told David, saying, 'Behold, the Philistines fight against Keilah, and they rob the threshing floors.'* Therefore David enquired of The LORD, saying, '*Shall I go, and smite these Philistines?*' And The LORD said unto David, '*Go, and smite the Philistines, and save Keilah!*'"—1 Sam. xxiii, 1, 2.

The heart of David still beat high with the love of his Country, notwithstanding his unmerited exile from it, and was still actuated by the love of justice, notwithstanding the measure of injustice that was dealt out to him; persecuted and oppressed himself, yet could he not bear that violence should be laid on Others, who were defenceless, without his standing forth their Champion and Protector. Fearless of Man, except The LORD'S Anointed, he forbore to give his valour sway, till he had consulted The SPIRIT of his GOD; unwilling to take anything in hand without DIVINE Permission. And why should Man in this our day act otherwise? It is the Same GOD, Whom David thus reverently inquired of, That now Ruleth over all the Kingdoms of the World; and in Him is no Variableness, neither Shadow of Turning: His Arm is not Shortened, that He cannot Save, nor His Wisdom Lessened, that He cannot Guide; neither are we less or greater, to do anything of ourselves than David; why, therefore, should we not piously seek DIVINE Counsel in all the works of our hands, and in all the workings of our hearts! for if we seek It in the right way, by earnest prayer and stedfast meditation on the Word of GOD, we shall assuredly find It.

"*And David's Men said unto him, 'Behold, we be afraid here in Judah; how much more then, if we come to Keilah against the Armies of the Philistines?' Then David enquired of The LORD yet again. And The LORD Answered him, and said, 'Arise, go down to Keilah, for I will Deliver the Philistines into thine hand.'*"—1 Sam. xxiii, 3, 4.

It is evident that David set himself in the way to follow The LORD'S Com-

mandment, and that he gave orders among his People to make themselves ready for the battle; but they, after communing among themselves, being Some of them of a character not having the holy fear of GOD, gave way to the fears of Man, and, therefore, called in question the policy of the measure which David proposed to them. Unexpected as such an obstacle probably was to him, David set about removing it in the way that was most satisfactory to his own mind, by laying the Consideration of it in supplication and submission before his GOD. And The ALMIGHTY Graciously Accepted his prayer, and Poured DIVINE Instruction into his heart; Giving him the Assurance of OMNIPOTENCE, that he should overcome his Enemy, how formidable soever that Enemy might seem, or that Others thought them. It is thus that He Graciously Deals with All without distinction of age, or rank, or sex, who, beset with spiritual Adversaries and the temptations of this World, both from within and from without, much more crafty and powerful in themselves, and infinitely more destructive in their effects, earnestly seek His Counsel with a heart predisposed to follow It; and when He Giveth or Promiseth Protection, no Enemy can even approach to hurt them.

*“So David and his Men went to Keilah, and fought with the Philistines, and brought away their cattle, and smote them with a great slaughter. So David saved the Inhabitants of Keilah.”—1 Sam. xxiii, 5.*

The Followers of David were not distrustful of his word, that The LORD had held Communion with him and Encouraged the encounter; but their conduct shewed their confidence in his sincerity, and their belief that the Arm of The LORD was Stretched forth in his Defence, and that the Promise of The ALMIGHTY would not fail; for their fears were dissipated, and they trusted that The LORD, The GOD of Battles, would Give them the Victory; nor in that trust were they mistaken.

*“And it came to pass when Abiathar, the Son of Ahimelech, fled to David to Keilah, that he came down with an Ephod in his hand. And it was told Saul, that David was come to Keilah. And Saul said, ‘God hath Delivered him into mine hand; for he is shut in, by entering into a Town that hath gates and bars.’ And Saul called all the People together to war, to go down to Keilah, to besiege David and his Men. And David knew that Saul secretly practised mischief against him: and he said to Abiathar the Priest, ‘Bring hither the Ephod!’ Then said David, ‘O LORD GOD of Israel! Thy Servant hath certainly heard that Saul seeketh to come to Keilah, to destroy the City for my sake. Will the Men of Keilah deliver me up into his hand? Will Saul come down, as Thy Servant hath heard? O LORD GOD of Israel, I beseech Thee, Tell Thy Servant!’ And The LORD Said, ‘He will come down.’ Then said David, ‘Will the Men of Keilah deliver me and my Men into the hand of Saul?’ And The LORD Said, ‘They will deliver thee up.’ Then David and his Men, which were about six Hundred, arose and departed out of Keilah, and went whithersoever they could go. And it was told Saul, that David was escaped from Keilah; and he forbore to go forth.”—1 Sam. xxiii, 6. 13.*

The Ephod and the robe of Ephod were of the garments that the Priests, in imitation of Aaron, had been appointed to wear, that *“their sound should be heard, when they went in unto the Holy Place before The LORD, and when they came out, that they died not.”*—(Exod. xxviii, 35.) In the presence, therefore, of an appointed Minister of GOD, David inquired of GOD through him, thus reverencing, though banished from the Holy Temple made with hands, the Ordinances of That GOD; and virtually acknowledging that in the Fulness of His Grace GOD had Made his Body the Temple of The HOLY GHOST. David had had private intimation from the Camp of Saul of the further violence meditated

him, and against Others on his account; whether this were derived from him or from other Channels, is not mentioned, though it is more probable the latter, since Saul, conscious of Jonathan's attachment to David, would not withhold from him the knowledge of his intentions. Of this indeed however, from whatever quarter derived, and to which he very justly claims the fullest credit, David avails himself, and instantly flies to his GOD for merciful Guidance under this further difficulty. But the conduct of David, the nature of the inquiry he causes to be made, namely, whether the Men he would deliver him up to Saul, should seem to imply, that instead of being a Fugitive from the arms of his own Countrymen, however unnaturally justifiably directed against him, he would now have opposed them, if the Men would not in all the baseness of ingratitude have delivered him up, who he, and so recently, delivered them from destruction, and was again ready to afford them his protection; but finding himself likely to be shamefully deceived by those who had been so greatly benefited by him, he again seeks refuge in flight, since GOD had seemingly so Appointed it; neither trusting in the strength of his own arm, nor to that assistance which he had so justly merited, and to a mind less free from presumption than David, and with less of experience. Human counsel, unsanctified by pious resignation, might have seemed more advisable. How different was the conduct of Saul, and what an awful instance he affords of the extent to which self-deception will lead the Soul, when the Soul is not right with GOD. With injustice and murder in his mind, and justifying the same by the scarcely congealed blood of innocent Thousands, he blasphemes against GOD, assuming that "*The LORD is on his side, and will deliver David into his hands*."

Can there be a more fearful state of self-deceivableness than this, or one in which the third Commandment is in spirit more obviously broken? And yet how many of us there are, who outwardly assume, in the arrogance of spiritual pride, that the LORD doth not Disapprove, or will not Heed, nay, that He will even bless our acts, which Our own conscience, if it were not seared as with a red-hot iron, would not but condemn! By checking the uprisings of an accusing conscience through a continuance in sin (that inward Monitor which is Given to us all as an Emanation from The SPIRIT of Grace to Keep us from all evil

Guide us unto all righteousness), we make that conscience become a persecuting one, leading us, like a lying Spirit in the mouth of false Prophets, to utter destruction. Let us regard, therefore, the first impulses of conscience as the Gracious, and Friendly, and Merciful Dictates of The SPIRIT of GOD, and follow whithersoever It Guides, and stop where It Appoints, as we would obey that which would insure us the immediate possession of every bliss that the heart could piously long for; since the attainment, like as the loss of Heaven, is a work of gradation, and every step we take, whether it be right or wrong, may lead us nearer either to joy or to sorrow.

*And David abode in the Wilderness, in strong holds, and remained in a cave in the Wilderness of Ziph. And Saul sought him every day; but GOD did not deliver him into his hand. And David saw that Saul was come out to seek him; and David was in the Wilderness of Ziph in a Wood. And Jonathan, Son of Saul, arose and went to David into the Wood, and strengthened his hand in him; and he said unto him, 'Fear not! for the hand of Saul, my Father, shall not reach thee; and thou shalt be King over Israel, and I shall be Next unto thee; it also Saul, my Father, knoweth.' And they Two made a covenant before the LORD. And David abode in the Wood; and Jonathan went to his house."*  
m. xxiii, 14. 18.

The friendship of Jonathan for David was as persevering as was the spirit of

his Father · persecuting. Though withholding himself from resisting the power of his Father, Jonathan knows that a Throne upheld by injustice must, ere long, fall; and relying on the sure Promises of GOD, that He would Build up the House of David in an Acceptable Season, though himself the presumptive Heir to the Crown, yet he contents himself with seeking a Secondary Situation in the Kingdom. At the peril of his Father's further displeasure, and, as a consequence, at the probable hazard of his own life, Jonathan keeps up a communication with David, and follows him to the depths of a Wilderness to pour comfort into his Soul; and, as a Ministering Angel Sent from HEAVEN, to awaken and reanimate his confidence in The LORD of all Power and Might, he sets before David in vision, as it were, the sure Reward of his faith, avowing his full persuasion that, Outcast as David then was, the time would assuredly come, when the *King's Son* would glory to be deemed worthy to be *Second* to him. What a lustre does this conduct of Jonathan throw on religious friendship, and how prominently does it hold forth the value of moderation in Princes, and still more the prudence of submission and subserviency to The DIVINE Will. No Earthly Consolation could have been greater than that thus administered to David; no conduct could have been more replete with pleasurable reflection, and the heart's cheering approval, than that of Jonathan. Thus is it in the power of every One almost to strengthen the hand and support the feeble knees of Others by leading them to trust in The LORD of All, and hoping in His Mercy in patience to possess their Souls.

△ *"Then came up the Ziphites to Saul to Gibeah, saying, 'Doth not David hide himself with us in strongholds in the Wood in the hill of Hachilah, which is on the south of Jeshimon? Now therefore, O King, come down according to all the desire of thy Soul to come down! and our part shall be to deliver him into the King's hand.' And Saul said, 'Blessed be ye of The LORD! for ye have compassion on me. Go, I pray you, prepare yet, and know and see his place, where his haunt is, and who hath seen him there: for it is told me that he dealeth very subtilly: see therefore, and take knowledge of all the lurking places, where he hideth himself; and come ye again to me with the certainty! and I will go with you; and it shall come to pass, if he be in the Land, that I will search him out throughout all the Thousands of Judah.'"*—1 Sam. xxiii, 19. 23.

Human policy guided and Human judgment may pardon the conduct of the Ziphites, for they had not, like the men of Keilah, owed in an especial manner deliverance from an enemy to David; and the fatal example of Nob, as incurring Saul's displeasure for having seemingly supported David, was before them. The salvation of one's own Life, and of the Lives of one's Wives and Little Ones, of all that is dear to us as connected with this Life, are powerful incentives to some disregard of the laws of hospitality. It is a hard thing to judge such a cause, unless there can fairly be imputed a knowledge that the Favour of The MOST HIGH had been Transferred from Saul to David, in which case the Ziphites were then leaguings with an Enemy to righteousness against HEAVEN, seeking the fleeting favour of an earthly Potentate, who could neither save nor destroy, unless it were Permitted him from Above, rather than studying the Will of The KING of Kings, Who hath Power to Cast both Body and Soul into Hell. And if such were the weak and impious policy of the Ziphites, verily they had their reward; but their sin in seeking thus the praise of Man, rather than of GOD, will surely find them out, and bring confusion on them in that awful Day of Account, when all hearts shall be open, and a Righteous JUDGE shall Pronounce on all the workings thereof, however hitherto falsely coloured or concealed. But whatever were the real motives of the Ziphites, we have in this passage a fresh instance of the dreadful deceivableness of sin in the imprecation of The

DIVINE Blessing by One with so impious a purpose in his heart. Saul's subtle policy led him to endeavour to impress on Others the persuation, that his was the injured cause, and that the destruction of David was an act of justice to his Country's King. But his heart, had he dispassionately and unprejudicedly consulted it, would have told him otherwise, and would have told him also that his very prayer must have been turned into sin.

*"And they arose and went to Ziph before Saul: but David and his Men were in the Wilderness of Muon, in the Plain on the south of Jeshimon. Saul also, and his Men went to seek him. And they told David; wherefore he came down into a rock, and abode in the Wilderness of Maon. And when Saul heard that, he pursued after David in the Wilderness of Maon: and Saul went on this side of the mountain, and David and his Men on that side of the mountain; and David made haste to get away for fear of Saul; for Saul and his Men compassed David and his Men round about to take them. But there came a Messenger unto Saul, saying, 'Haste thee, and come! for the Philistines have invaded the Land.' Wherefore Saul returned from pursuing after David, and went against the Philistines; therefore they called that Place Sela-hammahlekoth."*—1 Sam. xxiii, 24. 28.

Such is the infatuated blindness of jealousy or envy, which, influencing all the energies of the mind that yields to it towards the attainment of its object, even at the expense of sacrificing, in so doing, a true Friend, neglects to provide against the assaults of a deep, and rancorous, and vigilant Enemy. And so is it when the heart, devoted to the sensual pleasures and ambitious objects of this Life, neglects to provide against that fearful Day of Account, which comes in its Appointment though unlooked-for season, and sweeps away, as a Thief in the night, Many who then, when but too late, weep and lament that they had not watched against their Spiritual Adversary, and armed themselves by a suitable preparation of heart for the conflict, to which they are awfully and suddenly Called. By such seemingly natural means, as on this occasion operated to the Salvation of David. The LORD Saveth Such as are His. And in like manner, by the invisible but effectual Influence of Grace is it that GOD, of His Mercy through CHRIST JESUS, by the Power of The HOLY SPIRIT, Sendeth Deliverance from spiritual dangers, when all other hope of help hath failed.

*"And David went up from thence, and dwelt in strongholds at En-gedi. And it came to pass, when Saul was returned from following the Philistines, that it was told him, saying, 'Behold, David is in the Wilderness of En-gedi.' Then Saul took three thousand chosen Men out of all Israel, and went to seek David and his Men upon the rocks of the wild goats: and he came to the sheep-cotes by the way, where was a cave; and Saul went in to cover his feet. And David and his Men remained in the sides of the cave. And the Men of David said unto him, 'Behold the day of which The LORD Said unto thee, 'Behold, I will Deliver thine Enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good unto thee!' Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privily."*—1 Sam. xxiii, 29. xxiv, 1. 4. Acquainted by secret communication with all the hostile purposes of Saul, and knowing him to be again bent on his destruction, David has presented to him an opportunity, which placed his Persecutor altogether in his power, and laid his life even open to David's mercy. To avail himself of such an opportunity of ridding himself of so relentless an Enemy, David is exhorted by his Followers as of the Appointment of The MOST HIGH, The LORD of All, and Whose Providence is over All, to destroy the Anointed of The LORD—to steal on his acknowledged King, in the unguarded hour of sleep, and to send his guilty Soul, without one moment's time for repentance, to its awful account: but these Counsellors savoured not of the Things that are of The SPIRIT. David, however, more submissively yielding to the Benign Influence of That HEAVENLY

POWER, Which Teaches forbearance and patience and the love of mercy, strove to overcome evil with good, and forbore to hurt even a hair of Saul's head, contenting himself with only taking a part of his garment as a proof that Saul had been altogether in his power.

*"And it came to pass afterward, that David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt: and he said unto his Men, 'The LORD Forbid that I should do this thing unto my Master, The LORD'S Anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he is the Anointed of The LORD.' So David stayed his Servants with these words, and suffered them not to rise against Saul."*—1 Sam. xxiv, 5 to first part of 7. Having checked the passion of revenge in his own Spirit, David now exerted himself to arrest its progress in the minds of his Followers; and so far from encouraging in them a disposition of retaliation for the injuries Saul had inflicted on him, and the still greater calamities he had in contemplation to visit upon him, and in order to keep down any enterprising spirit against Saul's life, David manifested before them contrition for having even approached the LORD'S Anointed so irreverently, as to have cut off but the skirt of his garment; so anxious was he to inculcate amongst All, who were under his influence, and to illustrate it by practical demonstration, the highest reverence for the Appointments and Ordinances of his GOD.

△ *"But Saul rose up out of the cave, and went on his way. David also arose afterward, and went out of the cave, and cried after Saul, saying, 'My Lord, the King!' And when Saul looked behind him, David stooped with his face to the earth, and bowed himself. And David said to Saul, 'Wherefore hearest thou Men's words, saying, 'Behold, David seeketh thy hurt!' Behold, this day thine eyes have seen how that The LORD had Delivered thee to-day into mine hand in the cave: and Some bade me kill thee; but mine eye spared thee, and I said, 'I will not put forth mine hand against my Lord; for he is The LORD'S Anointed.' Moreover, my Father, see, yea, see the skirt of thy robe in my hand! for in that I cut off the skirt of thy robe, and killed thee not, know thou and see, that there is neither evil, nor transgression in mine hand; and I have not sinned against thee; yet thou huntest my Soul to take it. THE LORD Judge between me and thee! and The LORD Avenge me of thee! but mine hand shall not be upon thee: as saith the proverb of the Ancients, 'Wickedness proceedeth from the Wicked;' but mine hand shall not be upon thee. After whom is the King of Israel come out? after whom dost thou pursue? after a dead dog! after a flea! THE LORD therefore be JUDGE! and Judge between me and thee, and See, and Plead my cause, and Deliver me out of thine hand!'"*—1 Sam. xxiv, last part of 7 to 15.

So little conscious was David of giving rise to jealousy in the mind of Saul, that it seems he attributed the persecuting spirit exhibited towards him by the Latter, to the evil machinations of Others in poisoning the mind of Saul with untruths respecting him. And most judiciously should it seem did he resort to means the most likely to produce in the mind of Saul a contrary impression, and to convince him, by conduct as well as reasoning, that there was no evil design towards him in David's heart. In the fulness of a devout Soul he appeals to The JUDGE of Quick and Dead to Decide between them, adding the assurance that he would not himself raise his hand against Saul, but rely on the Providence of GOD for Protection. David then proceeds to set forcibly in contrast the relative situation of Saul and himself, urging on Saul the consideration of his high and exalted station as King over the Chosen People of The LORD, and likening himself to the most helpless and the meanest of the Subjects of Creation, in order thence to produce a conviction in Saul's mind of the degradation to which he was exposing himself by engaging in such hostility, as well as the utter inutility that must result from it in a temporal point of view, even in the

vent of its being ultimately successful to the destruction of One so guiltless and armless as David. From hence may be drawn some practical lessons of self-basement, and resignation to the Will of GOD, which, in every situation of life, may be found highly salutary and useful in their application to every Subject of the KING of Kings, with Whom are all Power, Might, Majesty, and Dominion, now and ever.

*"And it came to pass, when David had made an end of speaking these words unto Saul, that Saul said, 'Is this thy voice, my Son David?' And Saul lifted up his voice, and wept. And he said to David, 'Thou art more righteous than I; for how hast thou rewarded me good; whereas I have rewarded thee evil: and thou hast hewed this day, how that thou hast dealt well with me; forasmuch as when The LORD had Delivered me into thine hand, thou killedst me not: for if a Man find his Enemy, will he let him go well away? wherefore The LORD Reward thee Good, for that thou hast done unto me this day!' And now, behold, I know well that thou shalt surely be King, and that the Kingdom of Israel shall be established in thine hand! Swear now, therefore, unto me by The LORD, that thou wilt not cut off my Seed after me, and that thou wilt not destroy my name out of my Father's House!" And David sware unto Saul.*"—1 Sam. xxiv, 16 to first part of 22.

The force of truth is indeed mighty. On a heart desperately wicked and tony, as that of Saul, its influence was, for a season, irresistible, and the magnanimity of David, amidst such unmerited persecution, cut Saul to the quick and melted him to tears. Thus did David's conduct tend, as far as in him lay, to convert the Wicked from the error of his ways; and had the sorrow of Saul been a godly sorrow, and his repentance such as needed not to be repented of, his sins, though they were red as scarlet, would have been remembered no more. However faithless Saul had been in the performance of his own vows to walk righteously before The LORD, and to do justice and to love mercy, as His Vicegerent upon Earth; yet had he confidence in the faithfulness of David's vows, and seeing that The LORD Was with David, Saul exacts from him a solemn pledge of forbearance, and compassion, and protection towards his descendants; still influenced by worldly-mindedness, and more desirous of the raise of Men than of the Favour of GOD; not considering that by righteousness and holiness alone are Thrones established, and Crowns of Glory obtained, which are Eternal in the Heavens.

*"And Saul went home: but David and his Men got them up into the hold."*—Sam. xxiv, last part of 22. However seemingly sincere at the moment Saul's sorrow may have been, David, it appears, was unwilling to trust to the constancy of his conversion; and, therefore, still kept himself from the power of Saul; though in doing so he must have been severed from the chief Objects of his affection and regard—his Wife, and home, and Friends. Saul should have publicly acknowledged his injustice, have restored David to his honours and his office, and have received Jonathan and him to his bosom, as his Soul's and Kingdom's Counsellors. This would have been to have manifested a true repentance, which is naturally and necessarily followed up by amendment of conduct, where opportunity is afforded of giving effect to such an altered disposition of the heart; for without this a mere transient sorrow is fruitless and unprofitable, as rain upon a rock, and will, indeed, only the more condemn us when GOD shall Rise in Judgment and Reward every One according to his deeds.

*"And Samuel died; and all the Israelites were gathered together, and lamented him; and buried him in his house at Ramah. And David arose, and went down to the Wilderness of Paran. And there was a Man in Maon, whose possessions were in Carmel; and the Man was very great, and he had three thousand sheep and a thousand goats: and he was shearing his sheep in Carmel."*



*Now the name of the Man was Nabal, and the name of his Wife Abigail: and she was a Woman of good understanding, and of a beautiful countenance; but the Man was churlish, and evil in his doings; and he was of the House of Caleb. And David heard in the Wilderness that Nabal did shear his sheep: and David sent out ten young Men, and David said unto the young Men, 'Get you up to Carmel, and go to Nabal, and greet him in my name: and thus shall ye say to him, that liveth in prosperity, 'Peace be both to thee, and peace be to thine House, and peace be unto all that thou hast! And now I have heard that thou hast Shearers: now thy Shepherds, which were with us, we hurt them not, neither was there ought missing unto them all the while they were in Carmel. Ask thy young Men! and they will shew thee: wherefore let the young Men find favour in thine eyes: for we come in a good day; give, I pray thee, whatsoever cometh to thine hand unto thy Servants, and to thy Son David!'*"—1 Sam. xxv, 1. 8. The testimony paid by all the People of Israel to the memory of Samuel, as the Chosen Minister and Accredited Prophet of The LORD, should have additionally influenced Saul to renew within himself a right spirit, by turning his disobedient heart to the wisdom of the Just, that though his Kingdom might depart from him in his lifetime, or from his House after his death, yet he might save his Soul alive and wear a crown of Immortality. Such lessons, when offered, should be eagerly and zealously embraced; and the testimony borne to the memory of Those, who have counselled us in their life, or by their writings, to the ways of purity and piety, should be hailed and improved by us, as further efforts of DIVINE Grace and Favour to Bring back our steps to the ways of pleasantness and of peace. David's continued separation from Saul, the dictate of prudential self-consideration, was a proof, however, that such an influence was not produced on the heart of Saul by the death of him, who had been the Gracious Instrument of HEAVEN in rendering Saul the Anointed of The LORD, and had offered and pressed upon him that counsel which, had he followed, would have made his Election as well as Calling to a Spiritual and Everlasting Kingdom sure.


The forbearance of David respecting the property of Nabal, whose disposition was so unfriendly, and when David must occasionally have been much distressed for money and provisions, is a proof of the high principle of rectitude that religiously swayed his breast; and instructs us not to abuse the possession of power, nor, when persecuted ourselves, to follow up such oppression by our robbery of Others; but to guide our own steps in a perfect way, whatever calamity may overtake us. The salutation of David to Nabal is inimitable in point and in beauty. From the head of a band of Warriors it was most graciously condescending: such submissiveness could hardly have been looked for: and the preservation that David had notoriously afforded to Nabal, as well as all Israel, by the destruction of Goliath, gave him a just claim to offices of hospitality on the part of Nabal.

△ *"And when David's young Men came, they spake to Nabal according to all those words in the name of David, and ceased. And Nabal answered David's Servants, and said, 'Who is David? and who is the Son of Jesse? there be many Servants now a days, that break away every Man from his Master: shall I then take my bread, and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my Shearers, and give it unto Men, whom I know not whence they be?'"*—1 Sam. xxv, 9. 11. It was not that Nabal did not know who David was. He meant contemptuously to shew his sense of David's insignificance by the language which he used; and he then artfully goes on to mask his avariciousness under the cloak of loyalty, by intimating that David and his Followers had deserted the service of their respective Masters, and thrown off their allegiance to their King; and thus excusing himself, as upon seemingly honourable and praiseworthy motives, from

; of his substance for their subsistence. How doubly iniquitous in the  
of GOD, Who Knoweth the secrets of all hearts, must an evil deed be  
hypocritically attributed, as by Nabal, to good principles; and how care-  
should we watch the movements of our heart to save it from the like  
ding!

"So David's young Men turned their way, and went again, and came and told all those sayings. And David said unto his Men, 'Gird ye on every Man his sword: and they girded on every Man his sword, and David also girded on his sword: and there went up after David about four hundred Men; and two hundred remained by the stuff. But One of the young Men told Abigail, Nabal's wife, saying, 'Behold, David sent Messengers out of the Wilderness to salute our Master; and he will dwell on them: but the Men were very good unto us, and we were not hurt, neither missed we anything as long as we were conversant with them, when we were in the fields: they were a wall unto us both by night and day, all the while we were there, them keeping the sheep. Now, therefore, know and consider what thou wilt do: for evil is determined against our Master and against all his Household: for he is such a Son of Belial, that a Man cannot speak to him.'"—1 Sam. 12. 17.


d seems here to have departed from the forbearant principles he had previously acted upon, and to have given way to those feelings of resentment at the hateful and ungracious conduct of Nabal, which that conduct was but too calculated to excite, and which, from the weakness of our Nature, where the strengthening Influence of The HOLY SPIRIT is not studiously sought, is so general in the World. David, it is to be inferred, prepared himself and his followers to take by force what had been denied to entreaty. It is true that it had been the richer on their account; for not only, as his own Servants testified, did David's Men withhold from taking of Nabal's store, but they had over by night, as well as by day, and saved his sheep folds from the depredations of the evening, and from all surrounding Enemies. But, though it was David's duty, from principles of humanity as well as gratitude, and even justice, to require such offices of kindness and assistance with reciprocal dealing, as on the part of David they were voluntary, and no compact for their performance subsisted between him and Nabal, it was not in Human ordinances proper to say, that David had the right to repay himself; and it would have been more conformable to the principles, that should actuate a Character prepared to live in love of GOD and Man, not to have given place to wrath, nor violence, at least, to have sought even his own: but it was not till The Light Shone upon us, through JESUS CHRIST, that these Principles were fully understood, for That DIVINE PERSONAGE Said, "*A New Law I unto you: Bless thine Enemy! do good to them that persecute and shame-use you! bless and curse not!*" And in This Light, Shining around us in the all-glorious Lustrous, it behoves us to walk.

“ Then Abigail made haste, and took two hundred loaves, and two bottles of  and five sheep ready dressed, and five measures of parched corn, and an red clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs, and laid them on asses : he said unto her Servants, ‘ Go on before me ! behold, I come after you.’ But did not her Husband, Nabal. And it was so, as she rode on the ass, that she down by the covert of the hill ; and, behold, David and his Men came down at her, and she met them. (Now David had said, ‘ Surely in vain have I kept at this Fellow hath in the Wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that red unto him : and he hath required me evil for good : So and more also Do unto the Enemies of David, if I leave of all that pertain to him by the ng light any Male.’) And when Abigail saw David, she hastened and lighted ass, and fell before David on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and

*fell at his feet and said, 'Upon me, my Lord, upon me let this iniquity be! and let thine Handmaid, I pray thee, speak in thine audience, and hear the words of thine Handmaid! Let not my Lord, I pray thee, regard this Man of Belial, even Nabal; for as his name is, so is he: Nabal is his name, and folly is with him: but, I, thine Handmaid, saw not the young Men of my Lord, whom thou didst send: now, therefore, my Lord, as The LORD Liveth, and as thy Soul liveth, seeing The LORD hath Withholden thee from coming to shed blood, and from avenging thyself with thine own hand, now let thine Enemies, and they that seek evil to my Lord, be as Nabal! And now this blessing, which thine Handmaid hath brought unto my Lord, let it even be given unto the young Men that follow my Lord! I pray thee, forgive the trespass of thine Handmaid! For The LORD will certainly Make my Lord a sure House; because my Lord fighteth the battles of The LORD; and evil hath not been found in thee all thy days. Yet a Man is risen to pursue thee, and to seek thy Soul: but the Soul of my Lord shall be bound in the Bundle of Life with The LORD thy GOD; and the Souls of thine Enemies, them shall He Sling out, as out of the middle of a sling! And it shall come to pass, when The LORD shall have Done to my Lord according to all the Good that He hath Spoken concerning thee, and shall have Appointed thee Ruler over Israel, that this shall be no grief unto thee, nor offence of heart unto my Lord, either that thou hast shed blood causeless, or that my Lord hath avenged himself: but when The LORD shall have Dealt Well with my Lord, then remember thine Handmaid!' And David said to Abigail, 'Blessed be The LORD GOD of Israel, Which Sent thee this day to meet me; and blessed be thy advice, and blessed be thou, which hast kept me this day from coming to shed blood, and from avenging myself with mine own hand! for in very deed, as The LORD GOD of Israel Liveth, Which hath Kept me back from hurting thee, except thou hadst hasted and come to meet me, surely there had not been left unto Nabal, by the morning light, any Male.' So David received of her hand that which she had brought him, and said unto her, 'Go up in peace to thine house! see, I have hearkened to thy voice, and have accepted thy Person.'"*—1 Sam. xxv, 18. 35.

This history is interesting as it shews the opinion entertained by Abigail, a Woman of great judgment and discretion, of the character and principles of David, that he was a Man of truly generous sentiments, of pious affections, and that he had really deserved a very different treatment at the hands of Nabal, than that which he received. The sweeping vengeance which David meditated, that of visiting universal destruction on the Family and Servants of Nabal, was unwarrantable and cruel. Had he not been Providentially restrained, he would have sacrificed the Innocent and Guilty indiscriminately, even the very Shepherds, who bore willing testimony to David's forbearance and kindness, and, perhaps, in the indiscriminate onslaught, even the lovely Abigail herself; when the utmost measure of retributive justice should seem to have been the taking by force that portion of provision which was necessary for his and his followers maintenance for a season at least, and what had been denied to his reasonable and respectful application. But it is the province of Example to be useful in the lessons it conveys to us, of what we should forbear to do, as well as to direct and encourage us in the way wherein we should walk; and the failings of great and generally good Men, should incite us the more earnestly to pray, without ceasing, for the Enlightening and Helping Grace of GOD to check, on all occasions, the uprisings of our evil passions, lest they lead us on to destruction. Violent, however, as was the anger of David, and dreadful as was the resolution he engrafted on it, yet we see that his was not an unrelenting cruelty, but that on the submission of Abigail, he not only spared the Innocent, and checked his resentment against the despicable Nabal, but even acknowledged himself bound in the deepest gratitude to GOD for having made the Wife of Nabal instrumental to the

ing the sanguinary purposes of David's heart, and softening it into forbearance amidst the possession of power (humanly speaking), and the provocation and defiance so naturally calculated to excite its inflictive exercise. And in the small voice of conscience, as the Dictate of The HOLY SPIRIT, a more than Abigail is found to Admonish us to bridle our passions, and to prompt us, we "be angry, to sin not," Guiding our hearts unto meekness and the wearied exercise of passiveness, even under the endurance of positive wrongs, at the peace of our Soul no Man may take from us.

"And Abigail came to Nabal; and behold, he held a feast in his house like the  of a King; and Nabal's heart was merry within him, for he was very drunken; therefore she told him nothing, less or more, until the morning light: but it came to us in the morning, when the wine was gone out of Nabal, and his Wife had told him these things, that his heart died within him, and he became as a stone. And it came to pass about ten days after, that The LORD Smote Nabal, that he died. And when David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, 'Blessed be The LORD, That hath Pleaded the cause of my reproach from the hand of Nabal, and hath kept His Servant from evil! For The LORD hath Returned the wickedness of Nabal upon his own head.' And David sent and communed with Abigail, to take her to him to Wife. And when the Servants of David were come to Abigail to Carmel, they spake unto her, saying, 'David sent us unto thee to take thee to him to Wife.' And she arose, and bowed herself on her face to the earth, and said, Behold, Let thine Handmaid be a Servant to wash the feet of the Servants of my Lord.' And Abigail hasted, and arose and rode upon an ass, with five Damsels of hers, that went after her, and she went after the Messengers of David, and became his Wife."—1 Sam. xxv, 36. 42.

Self-gratification was Nabal's prevailing passion: No bounds were set to its indulgence, and for that object riches were sacrificed in wanton profusion. For the entertainment of Others in sensuality and festive folly, no expense was spared, though they, with all their smiles and blandishments, like the beautiful motes that peopled the sun-beam, when the sun's influence was withdrawn, would have looked gloomily and indifferently upon him in the instant that any reverse of fortune had overtaken him; whereas, only a small part of the superfluous treasures of his table, if given freely to David, would have secured to him a continuance of that protection and support, which had already been the occasion of their increase, and would not have failed him in the fearful time of still greater danger. But such is the folly of the wisdom of this World. It was Abigail's judicious gift to David, that turned away the destruction suspended from David's head over Nabal; and yet so strangely perverted was the mind of Nabal by the love of riches, and so blinded was he by that miserable infatuation, that the very thought of that gift, prudential and salutary as it obviously was with a view to Nabal's vital interest, gave a death-blow to his fancied peace, and sunk his Soul in anguish. It is from such instances as these, that, shunning such delusions, and walking in the Light that The SPIRIT of GOD, through CHRIST JESUS, sheds upon us, we should make to ourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness by a discreet, and honest, and charitable direction of such as are in our power, regarding them as only Committed to us as a trust, and using them accordingly, as good Stewards of the Manifold Goodness and Mercies of GOD, that in the Life to Come He may Give us that Treasure, which fadeth not away, but is Eternal in the Heavens.

Had Nabal lived, he would probably have endeavoured to have followed up his contempt of David by persecution, and have sought from Saul assistance towards his destruction. The suddenness of his death, whereby David's deliverance was effected from such an Enemy, was, therefore, attributable to, and was

acknowledged to be the Effect of DIVINE Interposition; and the sacrifice of a grateful heart was freely offered up in return for It. The instant that David could, consistently with the then usages of Society, which sanctioned Polygamy, seize the opportunity of seeking an union with Abigail, he did so. Struck, as he must have been, by the fascinating appearance and attractions of that Female, he yet respected the sacredness of the nuptial tie, and embraced not the occasion of sacrificing Nabal under any, however plausible, pretext, for the sake of possessing One, whom he so obviously desired as the Partner of his bosom and his bed. On this occasion at least, however we may sorrow for his disregard of the same virtuous principle of forbearance and restraint in the "sad matter" of Uriah, subsequently recorded, we must give him credit for the chastity of his heart. "*David also took Ahinoam of Jezreel, and they were also Both of them his Wives.*"—1 Sam. xxv, 43. The plurality of Wives had so prevailed in the Jewish polity, that it is difficult to consider David as censurable for giving in to the practice. But the Gospel Dispensation has discouraged, if not disallowed it, and the law of our Land has come in aid of a regulation highly salutary in its effects, as destroying the root of much Family jealousy and schism.

△ "*But Saul had given Michal, his Daughter, David's Wife, to Phalti, the Son of Laish, which was of Gallim.*"—1 Sam. xxv, 44. David had, doubtless, still kept up his secret communication with his Friends around the Court of Saul, and been, therefore, made acquainted with this harsh and cruel act of his own Father in law, in severing him irrecoverably from the Wife of his earliest affections, by devoting her to the embraces of Another. But for such unnatural separation, David might have cherished her through life as the only Sharer of his conjugal love.

"*And the Ziphites came unto Saul to Gibeah, saying, 'Doth not David hide himself in the hill of Hachilah, which is before Jeshimon?' Then Saul arose, and went down to the Wilderness of Ziph, having three thousand chosen Men of Israel with him, to seek David in the Wilderness of Ziph: and Saul pitched in the hill of Hachilah, which is before Jeshimon, by the way. But David abode in the Wilderness; and he saw that Saul came after him into the Wilderness: David, therefore, sent out Spies; and understood that Saul was come in very deed.*"—1 Sam. xxvi, 1. 4. Such is the effect of a hollow repentance; and this of Saul is an instance of a repentance to be repented of. The light of Truth had shewn him his error, and he confessed it; but what can confession profit, unless the heart goeth and sinneth no more! The first chidings of conscience should be promptly acted upon, being seized and retained with not less avidity, than a hand stretched out to save when sinking in the deep waters with no other means of salvation before us. To a mind thus instructed in the way of its peace, what hope remaineth when the means of attaining it are obstinately rejected. This it is which exemplifies the having put the hand to the plough and, afterwards, turning back therefrom; or, in less metaphorical description, after being dispossessed of an evil Spirit, the taking unto Oneself seven Others, and becoming ten times more wicked than before. For all our past offences, and whenever, henceforth, we are suddenly overtaken with a fault, let ours be a godly sorrow, instant, and active, and continual, and such as operates through the Grace of GOD (Which Worketh all in all) that change of feeling and purpose in the heart, which in life and in death will be full of Consolation in The LORD through faith in CHRIST as our SAVIOUR.

"*And David arose, and came to the place where Saul had pitched; and David beheld the place where Saul lay, and Abner, the Son of Ner, the Captain of his Host; and Saul lay in the trench; and the People pitched round about him. Then answered David, and said to Ahimelech, the Hittite, and to Abishai, the Son*

of Zeruiah, Brother to Joab, saying, 'Who will go down with me to Saul to the camp?' And Abishai said, 'I will go down with thee.' So David and Abishai came to the People by night, and behold, Saul lay sleeping within the trench, and his spear stuck in the ground at his bolster; but Abner and the People lay round about him. Then said Abishai to David, 'GOD hath Delivered thine Enemy into thine hand this day: now, therefore, let me smite him, I pray thee, with the spear, even to the earth, at once, and I will not smite him the second time.' And David said to Abishai, 'Destroy him not! for who can stretch forth his hand against The LORD'S Anointed, and be guiltless?' David said furthermore, 'As The LORD Liceth, The LORD shall Smite him: or his day shall come to die; or he shall descend into battle, and perish: The LORD Forbid that I should stretch forth mine hand against The LORD'S Anointed! But I pray thee, take thou now the spear, that is at his bolster, and the cruse of water; and let us go!' So David took the spear and the cruse of water from Saul's bolster; and they gat them away; and no Man saw it, nor knew it, neither awaked; for they were all asleep; because a deep sleep from The LORD was fallen upon them."—1 Sam. xxvi, 5. 12. Constant in his submissiveness to The DIVINE Dispensations, and firm in his faith, that the Promise of GOD would not Fail, David, though again having Saul Miraculously Put into his power, not only keeps his own hand from hurting him, but restrains that of Another solicitous, but (be it observed as a distinguishing mark of the reverence borne to David) respectfully solicitous to be allowed to extinguish at one blow him, who only, when sleep produced its state of insensibility within him, ceased to seek the destruction not only of David, but of All who cleaved unto him. But, to the disappointment of the eager hope in the mind of Abishai, David refers to the Mighty Power and Gracious Providence of GOD, and in the spirit of the most devout dependance on the DIVINE Will, and with confidence in Its Mercy, shrinks from destroying whom The LORD Distinguishingly Honoured, and attempts not to interfere with The ALMIGHTY'S Disposal of Saul's Life, though that Life had ceased to adorn the Doctrine of The LORD; David trusting that, though the Acceptable Season of The LORD for David's Deliverance was not then Arrived, yet that It would Come, and should be waited for. The helpless state of Saul, though he impiously confided in the Majesty of Human power, exhibits the folly of such dependance, when directed against the Counsels of The MOST HIGH; for The LORD Alone is our Defence, and He it is, That Bringeth Mighty Things to Pass. It is He Alone that Delivereth the Weak from him that is too strong for him, and Disappointeth the devices of the Wicked.

"Then David went over to the other side, and stood on the top of an hill afar off; a great space being between them: and David cried to the People and to Abner, the Son of Ner, saying, 'Answerest thou not Abner?' Then Abner answered and said, 'Who art thou, that criest to the King?' And David said to Abner, 'Art not thou a valiant Man? and who is like to thee in Israel? wherefore then hast thou not kept thy Lord the King? for there came One of the People in to destroy the King, thy Lord! This thing is not good, that thou hast done. As The LORD Liceth, ye are worthy to die, because ye have not kept your Master, The LORD'S Anointed. And now see where the King's spear is, and the cruse of water, that was at his bolster!' And Saul knew David's voice, and said, 'Is this thy voice, my Son David?' And David said, 'It is my voice, my Lord, O King!' And he said, 'Wherefore doth my Lord thus pursue after his Servant? for what have I done? or what evil is in mine hand? Now, therefore, I pray thee, let my Lord, the King, hear the words of his Servant: If The LORD have Stirred thee up against me, let Him Accept an offering: but if they be the Children of Men, cursed be they before The LORD! for they have driven me out this day from abiding in the Inheritance of The LORD, saying, 'Go, serve other gods!' Now, therefore, let not my blood fall

*to the earth before the Face of The LORD; for the King of Israel is come out to seek a flea, as when One doth hunt a partridge in the mountains.'"*—1 Sam. xxvi, 13. 20. It may seem that there was some degree of insincerity on the part of David in attributing the sleep, which had been produced by Supernatural Agency upon Abner and the whole Army of Saul, to carelessness and neglect of a most essential point of military discipline and duty; and in asserting that the mind of Saul had been set against David rather by the influence of Some of Saul's own Followers, than by the evil machinations of his own heart. It cannot be denied to be a rule of universal application to every situation and circumstance, that nothing can warrant a departure from truth; but it is assuming too much to say that David of a certainty knew his accusations to be false; the drowsiness might have been, in his idea, the effect of a natural cause, as without a DIVINE Revelation of its real origin, it would obviously appear so. Doeg, the Edomite, had found favour in the sight of Saul for his relentless desolation of the city of Nob and its unoffending Inhabitants, merely on David's account; it was not, therefore, unnatural to suppose that the continuance of that favour in the case of Doeg, and the obtainment of it in the case of Others, might induce to a systematic nourishment of Saul's dislike of David, by feeding his mind with suggestions hostile to David, which, however void of fact, might not be so of ingenuity; and as David could not possibly know all that was passing in the secret chambers of the heart of Saul, or of his corrupt Counsellors, such a conclusion on the part of David was far from a strained one. But the day will come, when to every eye will be unfolded the truth in this respect with reference to David, as in all respects whatsoever it will be with reference to ourselves, and to our every thought, and word, and deed, and the genuine and undisguised motive for each; and that a Righteous Judgment will be Passed upon every One, and in the necessary and unalterable Operation of DIVINE Justice, It will be Passed without Mercy upon All who have neglected the Salvation Offered them through the efficacy of the Merits and Mediation of JESUS CHRIST.

*"Then said Saul, 'I have sinned! Return, my Son David! for I will no more do thee harm, because my Soul was precious in thine eyes this day: behold, I have played the Fool, and have erred exceedingly!' And David answered and said, 'Behold the King's spear! and let One of the young Men come over and fetch it. The LORD Render to every Man his righteousness and his faithfulness: for The LORD Delivered thee into my hand to day: but I would not stretch forth mine hand against The LORD'S Anointed. And, behold, as thy life was much set by this day in mine eyes, so let my life be much Set by in the Eyes of The LORD, and let Him Deliver me out of all tribulation!' Then Saul said to David, 'Blessed be thou, my Son David! thou shalt both do great things, and also shalt still prevail.'"*  
—1 Sam. xxvi, 21 to first part of 25.

Saul had the candour not to accuse Others of his own faults, but to acknowledge them openly, and to avow, before his whole Army, the innocence and forbearance of David, And had Saul's repentance been sincere, David would have rejoiced in the opportunity of heartily forgiving him. So is it that through the efficacy of the Merits and Mediation of JESUS CHRIST, the SON of Abraham, the SON of David, The SON of GOD, all our iniquities against The AUTHOR and PRESERVER of our Lives, The DISPENSER of all Good, Whose Tender Mercies are over all His Works, would be Freely and Fully Pardoned, if we exhibited a godly sorrow for them. David, in the consciousness of his own innocence with respect to Saul, called upon GOD to Execute a Righteous Judgment upon the workings of David's own heart, thus bearing testimony equally to the Omniscience, as to the Omnipotence of JEHOVAH; and notwithstanding his own forbearance of the use of power, asks no other recompense than

the Protection of himself by The ALMIGHTY from the hands of all his Enemies, still leading the mind of Saul to consider and reflect how vain is the hope of opposing the Appointments of HEAVEN; and that the most acceptable exercise of power in the Sight of GOD is that of mercy, for "Earthly power doth then look likest GOD'S, when mercy seasons justice." As far as words could extend, this lesson, supported as it was by example, wrought a momentary change at least in the disposition of Saul, for he not only owned his own folly and proclaimed the unmerited kindness of David towards him, but invoked the Favour of The LORD of Heaven and Earth upon him, and, in the spirit of Prophetic vision, avowed the final Glory of the faithful David. And how will the earthly Persecutors of the pious Soul acknowledge, in the Day of Judgment, to their everlasting shame and confusion, the kindness and forbearance of those hearts they vexed, and those bodies they tortured, in defiance of Heavenly Admonitions, to gratify a spiritual pride, or satiate a thirst for earthly distinction!

"So David went on his way; and Saul returned to his place. And David said in his heart, 'I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul; there is nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape into the Land of the Philistines; and Saul shall despair of me, to seek me any more in any Coast of Israel; so shall I escape out of his hand.' And David arose, and he passed over with the six hundred Men that were with him, unto Achish, the Son of Maach, King of Gath."—1 Sam. xxvi, last part of 25., xxvii, 1, 2. Still distrustful of Saul, as foreboding that his heart was not changed, notwithstanding the warmth of his professions, David confided rather in the mercy of his open Enemies, than in Saul. And as did Saul, so do All who surrender themselves up to the influence of the Spirit of evil, and drive from them The True COUNSELLOR, Whose Eye Seeth all the workings of the heart, and, however plausible and imposing to the Human mind may be its outward professions of religious love, Knoweth when hypocrisy and insincerity are at the bottom, and then Leaveth it to self-deception and destruction. May David thus teach us what The SON of David, the Spiritual DELIVERER of every true Israelite will Teach us, that in professing to love and serve Him, if we love and serve Him not in spirit and in truth, He will Leave us to become the willing Victims of those Philistines, which in the character of remorse, and confusion, and condemnation, and despair, will be our bitter portion for ever and ever.

"And David dwelt with Achish at Gath, he and his Men, every Man with his Household, even David with his two Wives, Ahinoam, the Jezreelitess, and Abigail, the Carmelitess, Nabal's Wife. And it was told Saul that David was fled to Gath; and he sought no more again for him. And David said unto Achish, 'If I have now found grace in thine eyes, let them give me a place in some Town in the Country, that I may dwell there! for why should thy Servant dwell in the royal City with thee?' Then Achish gave him Ziklag that day; wherefore Ziklag pertaineth unto the Kings of Judah unto this day."—1 Sam. xxvii, 3, 6.

The address of David is remarkable, and is a proof of the Self-government and prudence that usually belonged to him. Himself, the direst Enemy the Philistines had encountered, the Destroyer of their Country's Champions, and who had paid his Wife's dowry by the obscene sacrifice of so Many of their Sons, yet so ingratiates himself into the favour of One of their Kings, as to obtain from him, not only countenance and encouragement, but even the gift of one of his Cities. Though David thereby should seem to have virtually sold himself from his Country, and to have adopted that of her avowed and relentless Adversary.

"And the time, that David dwelt in the Country of the Philistines, was a full year and four months. And David and his Men went up and invaded the Geshurites, and the Gezrites, and the Amalakites; for those Nations were of old




*the Inhabitants of the Land, as thou goest to Shur, even unto the Land of Egypt: and David smote the Land, and left neither Man nor Woman alive, and took away the sheep, and the oxen, and the asses, and the camels, and the apparel, and returned and came to Achish. And Achish said, 'Whither have ye made a road to day?' And David said, 'Against the South of Judah, and against the South of the Jerahmeelites, and against the South of the Kenites.' And David saved neither Man nor Woman alive, to bring tidings to Gath, saying, 'Lest they should tell on us, saying, 'So did David, and so will be his manner all the while he dwelleth in the Country of the Philistines.' And Achish believed David, saying, 'He hath made his People Israel utterly to abhor him; therefore he shall be my Servant for ever.'—1 Sam. xxvii, 7. 12.*

Cruelty and deception seem to characterise this incident in the life of David. For the sins of these People it is probable that this Judgment of Destruction was Visited upon them, and the general cause of Israel was politically, to all appearance, advanced by these efforts of David, though himself a persecuted Exile from her bosom; but commendable as is the love of Country, and still more so when displayed towards an ungrateful one, yet cannot it be reconciled to general notions of propriety, to exhibit it at the expense of sacred obligations, voluntarily entered into, and with the adoption and utterance of falsehood. On David, personally, it is not necessary for us to pass sentence. To his GOD and Our GOD, Who Searcheth the deep recesses of the heart, and Weigheth in His Unerring Balance all the actions of Men, he must stand or fall. It behoves us, however, to take heed that, unless with motives conscientiously and Scripturally justifiable, we do not in this respect the like with David; if only the like circumstances, thus briefly detailed, should surround us. Neither the fear of death, nor the love of life, should induce us otherwise than to keep faith even with Heathens, especially when the pledge of that faith is of our own seeking: but neither must we arrogate to ourselves a fancied superiority over David, because we may not have in like manner offended, but rather ask our own hearts, in the spirit of sincerity, and after a careful examination of our own lives and conversation, and studying the nature and effect of our motives and desires, If GOD were Extreme to Mark what is done amiss, who should be able to stand?

△ *"And it came to pass in those days, that the Philistines gathered their Armies together for warfare, to fight with Israel. And Achish said unto David, 'Know thou assuredly that thou shalt go out with me to battle, thou and thy Men.' And David said to Achish, 'Surely thou shalt know what thy Servant can do.' And Achish said to David, 'Therefore will I make thee Keeper of mine head for ever.' Now Samuel was dead, and all Israel had lamented him, and buried him in Ramah, even in his own City. And Saul had put away those that had familiar Spirits, and the Wizards out of the Land. And the Philistines gathered themselves together and came and pitched in Shunem; and Saul gathered all Israel together, and they pitched in Gilboa: and when Saul saw the Host of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled. And when Saul inquired of The LORD, The LORD Answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by Prophets: Then said Saul unto his Servants, 'Seek me a Woman that hath a familiar Spirit, that I may go to her, and inquire of her!' And his Servants said to him, 'Behold, there is a Woman, that hath a familiar Spirit, at En-dor.' And Saul disguised himself, and put on other raiment; and he went and two Men with him; and they came to the Woman by night; and he said, 'I pray thee, divine unto me by the familiar Spirit, and bring me him up, whom I shall name unto thee!' And the Woman said unto him, 'Behold, thou knowest what Saul hath done, how he hath cut off Those, that have familiar Spirits and the Wizards, out of the Land! wherefore then layest thou a snare for my life, to cause me to die?' And Saul sware to her by The*

saying, 'As The LORD Liveth, there shall no punishment happen for this thing.' Then said the Woman, 'Whom shall I bring up unto And he said, 'Bring me up Samuel!' And when the Woman saw Samuel, d with a loud voice; and the Woman spake to Saul, saying, 'Why hast ceived me? for thou art Saul.' And the King said unto her, 'Be not for what sawest thou?' And the Woman said unto Saul, 'I saw Gods ug out of the Earth.' And he said unto her, 'What form is he of?' And she An old Man cometh up, and he is covered with a mantle.' And Saul per- that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground, and bowed : And Samuel said unto Saul, 'Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me And Saul answered, 'I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war me, and GOD is Departed from me, and Answereth me no more, neither by ts nor by dreams; therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known e what I shall do.' Then said Samuel, 'Wherefore then dost thou ask of me, The LORD is Departed from thee, and is Become thine Enemy? and The ) hath Done to him, as He Spake by me; for The LORD hath Rent the m out of thine hand, and Given it to thy Neighbour, even to David: because beyedst not the Voice of The LORD, nor executedst His Fierce Wrath upon k; therefore hath The LORD Done this Thing unto thee this day: Moreover, ORD will also Deliver Israel with thee into the hand of the Philistines; and row shalt thou and thy Sons be with me: The LORD also shall Deliver the f Israel into the hand of the Philistines.' Then Saul fell straightway all e the earth, and was sore afraid, because of the words of Samuel; and there strength in him; for he had eaten no bread all the day, nor all the night. ie Woman came unto Saul, and saw that he was sore troubled, and said unto Behold thine Handmaid hath obeyed thy voice, and I have put my life in my and have hearkened unto thy words, which thou spakest unto me: now, there- pray thee, hearken thou also unto the voice of thine Handmaid, and let me set a of bread before thee, and eat! that thou mayest have strength when thou goest way!' But he refused, and said, 'I will not eat.' But his Servants, r with the Woman, compelled him; and he hearkened unto their voice. So e from the earth, and sat upon the bed; and the Woman had a fat calf in the and she hastened and killed it, and took flour and kneaded it: and did bake med bread thereof; and she brought it before Saul and before his Servants; y did eat. Then they rose up, and went away that night."—1 Sam. xxviii.

he confidence reposed by Achish in David, bore testimony, at least, to s valour and prudence; but whether the pledge of assistance, virtually by David (for equivocation can be no admissible excuse in the Sight of Who Trieth the heart and Searcheth the very thoughts) was sincere, or left in uncertainty: the jealousy of Philistia's other Princes prevented ng put to the test. Faith should be kept even with Heathens and with es. The Soul devoted entirely to its GOD, conscious of His Unceasing avoidable Presence, is incapable of deliberately offending Him, Who is OD of Truth, and Loveth It in the inward parts: and however heretofore y have offended in this respect, and though the hope of Forgiveness h CHRIST JESUS may be extended towards us, let us not presume on a ance of such Forbearance and Mercy, and continue in such sin; for the e of Pardon towards us, as still greater Offenders and much less zealous ts of GOD, may be full, and the addition of one more such premeditated s to The SPIRIT of GOD, may involve us in irretrievable ruin in the Life

2.  
e death of Samuel, as the acknowledged Prophet of The LORD, should akened in Saul the apprehension that That LORD had Withdrawn His

Light from Israel, and that in such a night of Spiritual darkness, David, also the great Instrument of Israel's defence, being away, she would become the easy prey of her sanguinary Enemies; and such apprehension should have led Saul on to seek, in penitence and prayer, that Reconciliation and Help, Which it is of The LORD of Hosts alone to Yield. But destitute of that Guide, who had pointed to him the way to attain and secure The DIVINE Favour, unwilling to do that, which his own conscience must have proclaimed to him was indispensable to his recovery of It, he prays under the influence of alarm, but prays without the suitable preparation of the heart, and consequently without deriving any salutary effect from such prayer. And hence is seen, how vain it is to suppose that if GOD be only in our thoughts, when calamity overtakes us, He will not Mock when our fear cometh; and that the approaching him with our lips cannot be Acceptable unto Him, or beneficial to ourselves, if our hearts are far from Him, from Whom all real Benefits are Derived, and to Whom, therefore, all obedience, as well as praise, is due.

To pray to God, and not to be Heard of Him, or rather to have our prayers Rejected, for it cannot be but that, Humanly speaking, His Ear is every where and ever Open, is indeed the most awful state that in this Life the Soul can be subjected to—it is the forerunner of that state of horror which awaits those, who are Rejected from DIVINE Mercy in the Life to Come; and that too with the full consciousness that they are so, as the bitter but Predicted Consequences of their own folly. Saul's aim in his prayer was to confirm himself in his temporal power; he offered no contrite spirit, which is so Acceptable unto GOD; or, great as his sins were, he might have been Favourably Heard: he pledged himself to no newness of conduct, whereby alone, if sincerely proffered, he could reasonably hope to regain The DIVINE Favour: alienated as his affections were from his GOD and His Holy Law, it was not consistent with DIVINE Wisdom that DIVINE Power should be Manifested in him; his Soul had become the willing Votary of Satan, and Heaven and Hell cannot unite. If, therefore, we would pray that we may be Favourably Heard by Him, Who Hearerth prayer, we must pray, whether in the day of trouble or the hour of death, with another heart and disposition than those of Saul; for otherwise though we may be afraid and our hearts tremble, yet when we inquire of The LORD, The LORD will Answer us not, neither by His Word nor by His SPIRIT.

Miraculous as the history of the appearance of the Spirit or Ghost of Samuel is, yet if it be considered as the Appointment of The LORD, it may be easily reconciled to us by being referred to the Source of all other Miracles, the Universality of GOD's Power: as far as David's history is affected by it, or observations to any practical purpose are to be drawn from it (beyond the general consideration that the appearance of Samuel's Spirit after death is one amongst the many proofs of the Immortality of the Soul, and of the Spirit's existence in some intermediate state, in the interval of its separation from the body between the death and resurrection of the latter), the answer of Samuel prophetically confirmed the Faithfulness of GOD'S Promises, and that His Eye is over the Righteous, and ever Open to his prayer: that GOD Regardeth disobedience as the sin of witchcraft; and, though He may be Slow to Anger in the Punishment of that offence (as was indeed verified in the instance of Saul's commission of it), yet it assuredly shall not go unpunished if unrepented of. The effect of Samuel's prophecy, that Saul's death was near at hand, exemplifies that sorrow of heart is not always repentance, or that repentance may be such as to need to be repented of, or that it may come too late, when the Door of Mercy is Closed for ever, and DIVINE Justice must Take Its Course. Had Saul listened to the first admonitions of this holy Prophet, The LORD would not have

an Enemy in this awful crisis of his fate; and as we have a Samuel in the voice of our Conscience and in the Revealed Law of our GOD, it is us to take heed that we walk whithersoever it directeth us, lest we stray errably into the path of the Destroyer.

That a melancholy picture is here presented of fallen Human Nature! hosen of GOD driven from his propriety by the abject fear of death! appointed of The LORD Forsaken by That LORD, and seeking refuge in the of lies, though himself so lately striving to exterminate the Minions of evil One, in the Wizards and Familiar Spirits with necromancy from his own.

*Now the Philistines gathered together all their Armies to Aphek; and the tents pitched by a fountain, which is in Jezreel: and the Lords of the Philistines came on by Hundreds and by Thousands: but David and his Men passed on in the word with Achish. Then said the Princes of the Philistines, 'What do these men here?' And Achish said unto the Princes of the Philistines, 'Is not this the Servant of Saul, the King of Israel, which hath been with me these days many years, and I have found no fault in him since he fell unto me unto this day?' And the Princes of the Philistines were wroth with him; and the Princes of the Philistines said unto him, 'Make this Fellow return, that he may go again to his Master: thou hast appointed him, and let him not go down with us to battle; the battle he be an Adversary to us: for wherewith should he reconcile himself to his Master? should it not be with the heads of these Men? Is not this David, whom they sang One to Another in dances, saying, 'Saul slew his Thousands, and David his Ten Thousands?' Then Achish called David and said unto him, 'Why as The LORD Liveth, thou hast been upright, and thy going out, and coming in with me in the Host is good in my sight; for I have not found evil in thee from the day of thy coming unto me unto this day: nevertheless the Lords favour thee: wherefore now return, and go in peace, that thou displease not the Lords of the Philistines.' And David said unto Achish, 'But what have I done? and what hast thou found in thy Servant so long as I have been with thee unto this day, that I may not go fight against the Enemies of my Lord the King?' And Achish answered and said to David, 'I know that thou art good in my sight, as an Angel of the LORD: notwithstanding, the Princes of the Philistines have said, 'He shall not go with us to the battle.' Wherefore now rise up early in the morning with thy Master's servants, that are come with thee: and as soon as ye be up early in the morning, and the light, depart!' So David and his Men rose up early to depart in the morning, and came into the Land of the Philistines. And the Philistines went up to Jezreel.' am. xxix.*

The jealousy of the Philistines was natural, and the force of their reasoning at the policy of trusting to David under such circumstances strong; indeed part at least of the past conduct of David, during his continuance with them, in the destruction of the Geshurites, the Gezerites, and the Amalekites, adverted to, notwithstanding the latter had not even a suspicion of it, doubt may well arise whether David would not in reality have done as the words of the Philistines foreboded of him. The valour of David, and his great zeal in the cause of his Country, are here testified of by his very Adversary, and but for the unnatural and insatiable persecution, to which he was subjected through the malignant and envious disposition of Saul, he might have lived even without reproach in his Generation, true to his King, his Country, his GOD, contented with the portion of good allotted to him in the endearment of one Wife, and in the opportunities of communicating public good, which his public station afforded him. But it is in trials and temptations that the heart reveals the secrets of its composition; and cautious and circumspect, therefore,

should Others be in the visitation of their judgments upon the conduct of their Fellow-Creatures, lest being tempted in all respects like them, they may still be found not without sin. In a strange and Heathen Land it is conspicuously observable that David did not depart from the worship of The True GOD, and of this the testimony of Achish, in assimilating him to an Angel of That Almighty POWER, is strongly corroborative. Though David's trials were indeed fiery, he being ungraciously treated by his own Brethren, whom he tenderly loved, being assailed with the weapons of death by his own King, whom he had faithfully and essentially served, having the arms of his own Country arrayed against him, though to that Country, at the peril of his own life, he, under GOD, had administered salvation from its most formidable and otherwise seemingly invincible Foe, being driven from the endearments of social and domestic life, the relation of Husband and Father at once broken in upon, and the affections of her, he so ardently loved, diverted to Another; doomed, moreover, to give countenance and support to the Profligate and Dissatisfied, and to receive them into his confidence; yet withal never withdrawing his allegiance from his GOD, but patiently waiting, and piously trusting in His Gracious Providence; in no instance reflecting upon HEAVEN for the hardness of his destiny, but continuing in hope even against hope, as it were, that the Acceptable Time of The LORD, for His Servant's Deliverance, would assuredly once come, however long it might tarry: when these things are duly considered, it is not, or it should not be in sober-minded Man, at least, severely to pass sentence on the occasional weaknesses that overtook an Individual, having the infirmities of his nature in common with his Fellow-Mortals. And our object should be rather to try ourselves by his standard of merit and demerit, than eagerly to find fault with his errors; but, at the same time, it is just and necessary that those errors we should both see, and understand, and meditate upon, that we may strive not to fall into the like failings and condemnation; but the bright parts of the portrait should we as anxiously and deeply contemplate, that according to our respective spheres and abilities, we may strive to exhibit the same or equal graces.

△ *"And it came to pass, when David and his Men were come to Ziklag on the third day, that the Amalekites had invaded the South and Ziklag; and smitten Ziklag, and burned it with fire: and had taken the Women Captives, that were therein; they slew not Any, either great or small, but carried them away, and went on their way. So David and his Men came to the City, and behold, it was burned with fire; and their Wives, and their Sons, and their Daughters were taken Captives! Then David, and the People that were with him, lifted up their voice, and wept, until they had no more power to weep: and David's two Wives were taken Captives, Ahinoam, the Jezreelitess, and Abigail, the Wife of Nabal, the Carmelite. And David was greatly distressed: for the People spake of stoning him, because the Soul of all the People was grieved, every Man for his Sons and for his Daughters. But David encouraged himself in The LORD, his GOD."*—1 Sam. xxx. 1. 6.

Deep as had been the measure of David's calamity until this period, yet he seems now to have had Administered to him the very dregs of the cup of bitterness and sorrow—his house demolished, all his ornaments prostrated, his Wives, his Daughters torn from him, and become the prey of an infuriated and merciless Enemy—his little Ones looking in vain for Parental consolation; the Companions, and hitherto faithful Companions of his fortunes, overwhelmed with the torrent of grief which thus equally bore down upon them, as on their Master, yet absorbed in the contemplation of their own misery, without heeding the woes of David, rising rebelliously against him, and openly conferring on the means of exterminating him, to whom they attributed all their sorrows (reasoning, perhaps, that as from Ziklag, which Achish had humanely given David and his Followers

for a City to dwell in, he influenced them to go forth and destroy the Amalekites, who were friendly if not tributary to Philistia, this was now but retributive justice, and that, at all events, David was criminally rash as a General in leaving his own Territories unguarded, whilst engaging unnecessarily in a foreign war); but though thus destitute of all earthly hope, and desolate and forsaken of All, yet did he not forsake his GOD, nor was faithless of His Promised Salvation, thus manifesting a constancy in piety; a principle which may be and should be fondly cherished by us in every occurrence of adversity; and only the more applicable and consoling, as the extent of that adversity becomes the greater and more trying, for here we should never faint; but even if our life be required of us by our most inveterate Enemy, still put our trust in The LORD, and in the Power of His Might, that, though He may Give us over unto death, since it is appointed unto all Men once to die, yet that, if we have faith, He will not Leave our Souls to Destruction, but Awaken us to Glory Everlasting in the Day of Universal Resurrection.

*"And David said to Abiathar the Priest, Ahimelech's Son, 'I pray thee, bring me hither the Ephod.' And Abiathar brought thither the Ephod to David: and David inquired at The LORD, saying, 'Shall I pursue after this Troop? shall I overtake them?' And He answered him, 'Pursue; for thou shalt surely overtake them, and without fail recover all!' So David went, he and the six hundred Men that were with him, and came to the Brook Besor, where Those, that were left behind, stayed. But David pursued, he and four Hundred Men; for two Hundred abode behind, which were so faint, that they could not go over the Brook Besor. And they found an Egyptian in the field, and brought him to David, and gave him bread, and he did eat; and they made him drink water; and they gave him a piece of a cake of figs and two clusters of raisins; and when he had eaten his Spirit came again to him; for he had eaten no bread, nor drunk any water, three days and three nights. And David said unto him, 'To whom belondest thou? and whence art thou?' And he said, 'I am a young Man of Egypt, Servant to an Amalekite; and my Master left me, because three days ago I fell sick. We made an invasion upon the South of the Cherethites, and upon the Coast which belongeth to Judah, and upon the South of Caleb; and we burned Ziklag with fire.' And David said to him, 'Canst thou bring me down to this Company?' And he said, 'Swear unto me by God, that thou wilt neither kill me, nor deliver me into the hands of my Master: and I will bring thee down to this Company.' And when he had brought him down, Behold, they were spread abroad upon all the earth, eating, and drinking, and dancing, because of all the great spoil that they had taken out of the Land of the Philistines, and out of the Land of Judah. And David smote them from the twilight even unto the evening of the next day: and there escaped not a Man of them, save four hundred young Men, which rode upon camels and fled. And David recovered all that the Amalekites had carried away; and David rescued his two Wives: and there was nothing lacking to them, neither small nor great; neither Sons nor Daughters; neither spoil, nor anything that they had taken to them: David recovered all."*—

1 Sam. xxx, 7. 19. David still retaining his religious belief in the Power and Providence of GOD, thus manifests its prevalence in his heart by resorting to the Appointed Means of its demonstration, and in conformity with the Levitical Institutes, making the Priest the Mediator of his peace with his GOD, and the Sacerdotal Emblem the Instrument by which he consults the DIVINE Oracles. On the Spiritual Communication consequent upon that intercessory operation, David, in all the humility of a devout heart, confidently relies, and unhesitatingly goes forward, nothing doubting of the Fulfilment of The DIVINE Promise and Benediction; nor did the falling away of so large a proportion as one Third of his Followers operate as a dissuasive from his purpose: for he knew that The

LORD JEHOVAH was his Strength, and that He could Save equally by Few as by Many. The incident of the deserted and fainting Egyptian, revealing the route of his Companions, is an instance of the extraordinary Providences of GOD being often Brought about by the most ordinary and simple operations of Nature, and that GOD, as a Wise MASTER BUILDER, Uses the means and materials that are most ready and fitting for His Purpose. The skill of David in the language of Egypt, which may be inferred as the obvious sense of the Text, is a further proof of the industry and talent of One, whose occupation was primarily the simple one of tending on sheep, and who had since been exposed to the busy perils of war, or to the bustling politics of the State.

△ *“And David took all the flocks and the herds, which they drave before those other cattle, and said, ‘This is David’s spoil.’ And David came to the two Hundred Men, which were so faint, that they could not follow David, whom they had made also to abide at the Brook Besor: and they went forth to meet David, and to meet the People, that were with him: and, when David came near to the People, he saluted them. Then answered all the wicked Men, and Men of Belial, of those that went with David, and said, ‘Because they went not with us, we will not give them ought of the spoil that we have recovered, save to every Man his Wife and his Children, that they may lead them away, and depart.’ Then said David, ‘Ye shall not do so, my Brethren, with that which The LORD hath Given us, Who hath Preserved us, and Delivered the Company, that came against us, into our hand; for who will hearken unto you in this matter? but as his part is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his part be that tarrieth by the stuff: they shall part alike.’ And it was so from that day forward, that he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel unto this day.”*—1 Sam. xxx, 20. 25. The Amalekites had deserted their Sick; and so would the Heathen-Israelites theirs, but David had studied a different rule of humanity, and the Divine Precept of Brotherly love operated religiously within him. The cause of the two Hundred of his Followers not participating in the labours and perils of the conflict was not criminal in them; they had been disabled by previous exertion, and it would have been almost injustice, and absolutely inhumanity, to have visited such infirmity with the principle of exclusion, such as was proposed; more especially as These had equally with the Others suffered in the burning and plunder of all that belonged to them; and humanity, whose movements are always congenial with true policy, dictated to David a generous dealing by these Sufferers. Feeling, as experience invariably realizes, that *“it is more blessed to give, than to receive,”* and that, however general, philanthropy is a duty to be practised to the utmost limit of our individual sphere, we should do good unto All, but especially unto Them that are of the Household of faith, being Partners of the same Spiritual hopes, and Heirs of the same DIVINE Promises with Ourselves. It is especially observable that the benevolence of David’s heart was not a self-assumed and self-originating moral influence—he does not set it up as a doctrine emanating solely from his own mind, and disclaim all Assistance from Superior Wisdom in the formation of his judgment, but, in the spirit of the truest piety, acknowledges not only the Miraculous Interposition of DIVINE Power in the attainment of a victory so signal and productive of benefit, but points to the Peculiar Bounty of GOD (from Whom indeed every good and perfect Gift Cometh), as a Principle to be sacredly imitated. *“It was not their own sword, nor their own strength, that had gotten them the victory, but The LORD, The GOD of Hosts, That Repaid Vengeance on their Enemies, Recompense to their Adversaries;”* and Who, having abundantly Blessed them, even beyond their hearts’ expectations, if not desires, had a Right to Expect, that they, in their turn, would give with a liberal hand, gathering from His Own

Example that "*The LORD doth Love a liberal Giver.*" And in all recoveries, as well as acquisitions of property, we shall do well not to overlook the case of the Distressed, but to give freely unto Such of our Brethren as have need; and if this principle, as applied to temporal goods, is thus sacredly commended and enjoined, in how much higher a sense is it deserving of adoption when embracing Spiritual and everlasting interests.

"*And when David came to Ziklag, he sent of the spoil unto the Elders of Judah, even to his Friends, saying, 'Behold a present for you of the spoil of the Enemies of The LORD.' To them which were in Beth-el; and to them which were in South Ramoth; and to them which were in Jattir; and to them which were in Aroer; and to them which were in Siphmoth; and to them which were in Eshtemoa; and to them which were in Rachal; and to them which were in the Cities of the Jerahmeelites; and to them which were in the Cities of the Kenites; and to them which were in Hormah; and to them which were in Chor-ashan; and to them which were in Athach; and to them which were in Hebron; and to all the Places where David himself and his Men were wont to haunt.*"—1 Sam. xxx, 26. 31. David thus continues to shew himself the Child of GOD, following the Great Example that was Set before him, he overcometh evil with good; and not only harboureth no resentment against those whose persecution and banishment of him, gave rise to the destruction of his habitation and the rapine of his Wives and Little Ones, but heapeth upon them blessings; and in a more marked degree imparting benefits to them who had, in the hour of his adversity, held out to him a helping hand, and afforded him shelter from the fury of the storm that threatened his destruction. The purity of his motives in so doing, as proceeding from sentiments of piety and gratitude, can scarcely be questioned, as there is nothing in the past character of David, that stigmatizes him with any over-eagerness to ascend the Promised Throne of Israel, or to stir up Others to throw off in his favour their betrothed allegiance to King Saul. To requite Others for kindnesses received, and to testify his ardent love for his Country, where the hallowed and heart-cheering voice of pure devotion had been heard and cherished by him with the first dawn of reason, were inducements that obviously and naturally influenced his conduct. And to such inducements should every heart yield, that would seek The LORD in the Way Wherein He may be Found.

"*Now the Philistines fought against Israel: and the Men of Israel fled from before the Philistines; and fell down slain in Mount Gilboa. And the Philistines followed hard upon Saul and upon his Sons: and the Philistines slew Jonathan and Abinadab, and Melchi-shua, Saul's Sons; and the battle went sore against Saul; and the Archers hit him; and he was sore wounded of the Archers. Then said Saul unto his Armour-Bearer, 'Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith; lest these Uncircumcised come and thrust me through, and abuse me!' But his Armour-bearer would not; for he was sore afraid. Therefore Saul took a sword, and fell upon it. And when his Armour-Bearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise upon his sword, and died with him. So Saul died, and his three Sons, and his Armour-Bearer, and all his Men, that same day together. And when the Men of Israel, that were on the other side of the Valley, and they that were on the other side Jordan, saw that the Men of Israel fled, and that Saul and his Sons were dead, they forsook the Cities and fled; and the Philistines came and dwell in them. And it came to pass on the morrow, when the Philistines came to strip the Slain, that they found Saul and his three Sons fallen in Mount Gilboa; and they cut off his head and stripped off his armour, and sent into the Land of the Philistines round about, to publish it in the house of their Idols and among the People: and they put his armour in the house of Ashtaroth: and they fastened his body to the wall of Beth-shan. And when the Inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead heard of that which the*



*Philistines had done to Saul, all the valiant Men arose, and went all night, and took the body of Saul, and the bodies of his Sons, from the wall of Beth-shan, and came to Jabesh, and burnt them there; and they took their bones and buried them under a tree at Jabesh; and fasted seven days.*"—1 Sam. xxxi.

Thus fell the bitter Enemy of David, an Enemy indeed without a cause, and fell in a conflict with that same hostile Power, against whom David, and David only, under GOD, had before been able to deliver him; but the pride of Saul's heart was unsubdued up to the instant of his Death, which the awfully daring act of self-destruction too incontrovertably confirmed. By the surrender of himself to the Philistines he might have had his life spared, on condition of being, perhaps, like Samson, their Captive, to do homage to their god; but his high spirit could not brook becoming the gaze, and the laughing-stock, and mockery of Man; and yet, in the blindness of that passion, he rushed on instant death to be made the mock and sport of Devils, having thereby shut out all further season for repentance, and standing, with all his sins at once laid open to him, in the conscious Presence of An Offended GOD, Whose Judgment, in the Immutable Counsels of Unerring Wisdom and Justice, must be without Mercy upon them, who have here set at nought His Commands, and outraged His Laws, living without shewing mercy to Others, and dying without faith, without prayer, and without hope. The death of Jonathan, whose piety and integrity of heart made him deservedly the cherished Friend of the righteous David, may seem to have been a severe Visitation of DIVINE Vengeance for the sins of the Father upon the Child; but Life with All must have an end, and, though the good Man may have peace here, yet does that peace arise mostly from the hope of an Hereafter, even from the Promise and the Prospect of Heaven; and to be Advanced from that hope to its fullest Fruition, though even by the hand of Violence, whether in open war, or private assassination, can be no cause of regret in the departed Spirit.

△ "Now it came to pass after the death of Saul, when David was returned from the slaughter of the Amalekites, and David had abode two days in Ziklag; it came even to pass on the third day, that, behold, a Man came out of the camp from Saul with his clothes rent, and earth upon his head; and so it was, when he came to David, that he fell to the earth, and did obeisance. And David said unto him, 'From whence comest thou?' And he said unto him, 'Out of the camp of Israel am I escaped.' And David said unto him, 'How went the matter? I pray thee, tell me?' And he answered, 'That the People are fled from the battle, and Many of the People also are fallen and dead; and Saul, and Jonathan, his Son, are dead also.' And David said unto the young Man that told him, 'How knowest thou that Saul, and Jonathan, his Son, be dead?' And the young Man, that told him, said, 'As I happened by chance upon Mount Gilboa, behold, Saul leaned upon his spear; and lo, the chariots and Horsemen followed hard after him: and when he looked behind him, he saw me, and called unto me. And I answered, 'Here am I.' And he said unto me, 'Who art thou?' And I answered him, 'I am an Amalekite.' He said unto me again, 'Stand, I pray thee, upon me, and slay me; for anguish is come upon me, because my life is yet whole in me.' So I stood upon him, and slew him; because I was sure that he could not live, after that he was fallen: and I took the crown, that was upon his head, and the bracelet, that was on his arm, and have brought them hither unto my Lord.' Then David took hold on his clothes and rent them: and likewise all the Men, that were with him: and they mourned, and wept, and fasted until even, for Saul, and for Jonathan, his Son, and for the People of The LORD, and for the House of Israel; because they were fallen by the sword. And David said unto the young Man, that told him, 'Whence art thou?' And he answered, 'I am the Son of a Stranger, an Amalekite.' And David said unto him,

*'wast thou not afraid to stretch forth thine hand to destroy The LORD'S Anointed?' And David called One of the young Men, and said, 'Go near, and upon him!' And he smote him, that he died. And David said unto him, 'Blood be upon thy head! for thy mouth hath testified against thee, saying, 'I slain The LORD'S Anointed.'''—2 Sam. i, 1. 16.*

The Amalekite, with the expectation of winning the favour and patronage of David, resorted to a deception, which wrought the very opposite effect, ending in his own destruction, though he expected it would have paved the way to his distinction and honour: thus instancing the impolicy as well as danger of mystery and double dealing. But the high reverence entertained by David for the Name and Glory of God, is worthy of consideration, and in a mind of the most devout character, as well as an humble submission to DIVINE Appointments. Greater disinterestedness could not have been exemplified than is here manifested by David, when apprised of the Destruction of himself—no reflections are cast upon his unjust persecution—no joy exhibited at the fall of Saul's triumph over him having eternally closed—not a murmur against him, as having endured wrongfully the extremest ills that persevering enemies could inflict; on the contrary, he mourns the death of Saul, as the most fatal Subject would his King, as a Child his Parent, or as a Man his Brother or friend; and indeed piety will ever be found the surest test of loyalty and of unflinching obedience even to a temporal Superior. But the judgment of David against the Amalekite seems to have been harsh and unjustifiable. If he had related the facts, they were such as should have excused a Stranger to the laws of Israel from vindictive chastisement; it would have been enough to have disappointed the expectations of aggrandizement as the Destroyer of David's Enemy. If his story were unfounded, David did not know as much, and on the contrary was conscious of his admitted veracity. It was, therefore, in either view, a visitation of Divine judgment, whether just or not, without mercy; and against the influence of such examples most cautiously should we guard ourselves, and so judge not, lest we be judged. Besides, the act was represented as solicited by Saul, and as only fulfilling his purpose of rescuing him from witnessing the further triumph of his bitter Foes, and saving him from the, to him, insufferable taunts of his cruel and relentless, and exasperated Enemy; somewhat extenuating the Amalekite's offence, and which should have been weighed in the balance of justice.

The zeal for the Name and Glory of GOD, as displayed by David on this occasion, was correspondent with the habits and propensities of the Jews, until Spiritual DAVID Came to Diffuse Sublimed Sentiments amongst Men. To him, who drew his sword in defence of his assailed MASTER, That MASTER, JESUS, The INCARNATE SON of GOD, Said, "*Put up thy sword! for they, that take the sword, shall perish by the sword.*"

"And David lamented with this lamentation over Saul and over Jonathan, his friend: (also he bade them teach the Children of Judah the use of the bow: behold, it is written in the book of Jasher.) *The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high Places: how are the Mighty fallen! Tell it not in Gath! publish it not in the Streets of Asdod! lest the Daughters of the Philistines rejoice: lest the Daughters of the uncircumcised triumph. Ye Mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, neither let there be rain upon you, nor fields of offerings! for there the shield of the Mighty is cast away; the shield of Saul, as though he had not been Anointed with Oil. In the blood of the Slain, from the fat of the Mighty, the bow of Jonathan turned back, and the sword of Saul returned not empty. Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their Lives, and in their death they were not divided: they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions. Ye Daughters of Israel*

weep over Saul, who clothed you in scarlet, with other delights; who put on ornaments of gold upon your apparel. How are the Mighty fallen in the midst of the battle! O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thine high Places! I am distressed for thee, my Brother Jonathan! Very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful; passing the love of Women. How are the Mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished!"—2 Sam. i, 17. 27. With all the impressiveness and force of poetical imagery is the grief of David accompanied; not the slightest allusion is made to the bitterness of sorrow that Saul had occasioned him, but he seems even to have forgotten that he was otherwise than the mildest and most beneficent of Monarchs. His jealousy for the honour of his GOD, lest the Heathens should exult in the downfall of Saul, as an assumed proof that there was not A GOD in Israel Greater than their idol Ashtaroth, was the natural effect of the piety that he professed; and most beautifully has that feeling been portrayed in language. The sorrow, indeed, shewn for Jonathan's fate, could not have been exceeded by the most ardent manifestation of the devoted affections of a Wife, mourning over the untimely fall of her Husband. Still is it observable that no murmur against The DIVINE Dispensations escapes him; his griefs, though they spoke thus eloquently, are unmingled with any utterance of complaint against That POWER, Who had Witnessed, in every stage, the unfeigned attachment that subsisted between Jonathan and David, and Knew the consolation and joy which the Latter experienced from its prevalence, and could not but equally Recognize the regret, to which its total termination, by the irrevocable fiat of Death, gave rise. All here is tacit submission to that Appointment, as far as the Hand of GOD was Visible in its Direction; but with the sublimer affections of the Saint, the feelings of the Man were delicately blended, and a finer study for imitation in these respects can scarcely be drawn than is here given. The death of Friends, however exalted may be our piety, must for a season afflict; but never should any occurrence of that, or any other terrestrial nature, induce us to repine at the Will of PROVIDENCE, or to withdraw our allegiance from Him, Who is The KING of Kings; and Who, in Friendship towards All, who cleave unto Him, Sticketh Closer to us than a Brother. The friendship of Jonathan was constant and progressive; and but too truly did David say that the Love of Jonathan for him surpassed that of Women; for the Woman, of all Others, bound to David by the solemn bond of matrimony, though the Sister of Jonathan, had proved inconstant in her affections, though she had witnessed, in all its varieties, the true amiableness of character in David, which had so endeared him to Jonathan. Wonderful, indeed, was that love, that stood unshaken at the bidding of a Parent and a King (in all other respects revered and obeyed),—that the impending hand of death could not remove,—that absence, and exile, and poverty, and abandonment of the Individual towards whom it was extended, could not destroy or weaken.

△ "And it came to pass after this, that David inquired of The LORD, saying, 'Shall I go up into any of the Cities of Judah?' And The LORD Said unto him, 'Go up!' And David said, 'Whither shall I go up?' And He Said, 'Unto Hebron.'"—2 Sam. ii, 1. Strong as was David's affection for his Country, and fair as to a worldly-minded Man would have seemed the opportunity of his returning to it, now that his Enemy was no more, and the Kingly Crown had been brought to him, yet was his reverence for The DIVINE Will stronger, and to this all other ties in him gave way. After mourning the loss of his dearest Earthly Friend, his thoughts are naturally turned to the Land, whence Both had derived their birth, and where the knowledge and worship of their GOD alone prevailed. But in the example of David we see the propriety of not suffering our seemingly best prejudices to influence our conduct, without the fullest assurance that they

re Blessed and Sanctified by GOD'S Permission and Encouragement. The peculiar mode of DIVINE Communication to David, who was himself a *Prophet* and "*the Man after GOD'S Own Heart*," it may not be proper for us to wait for to calculate upon. Since David lived, The DIVINE Will has been more generally Revealed, and the Gospel of JESUS CHRIST, and the Writings of His Divinely Inspired Apostles, Constitute the Great Oracle, Which All may safely consult; and The PRIEST for Ever of The Spiritual Temple, JESUS CHRIST, The SON of Righteousness, by The HOLY SPIRIT, Expoundeth to every humble and faithful Heart, the Things That Belong unto its Peace; proclaiming, with the holy Job, that "*the fear of The LORD, that is Wisdom, and to depart from evil is Understanding.*"—xxviii, 28.

"*So David went up thither, and his two Wives also, Ahinoam, the Jezreelitess, and Abigail, Nabal's Wife, the Carmelite: and his Men, that were with him, did David bring up; every Man with his Household; and they dwell in the Cities of Hebron.*"—2 Sam. ii, 2, 3. Of them, whom The LORD Gave him, was David unwilling to lose One; they had contributed to uphold him in the season of adversity, and it was not in him to desert them, when he had perhaps scarce any need of their services. Though coming to him with characters somewhat questionable, yet he, by the prudence and wisdom of his management of them, had worked such a reformation in them, as was calculated to render them possibly far from useless Members to his Country's Commonwealth. The firmness and constancy of friendship are inseparable from a religiously regulated mind, and prosperity is primarily used by Such to feed the wants and promote the comforts of Those, whom adversity, that best test of profession, has proved to be vitally and heartily attached to us.

"*And the Men of Judah came; and there they anointed David King over the House of Judah.*"—2 Sam. ii, first part of 4. The Justice of The DIVINE Admonition is thus at once confirmed, for no sooner is David restored to his favourite City, than the hearts of the People, already open to receive him with gladness, confer on him the surest mark of confidence, and the highest badge of honour that it was possible for them to bestow; and this even at the hazard of bringing down upon them the vengeance or hostility of the still surviving Enemies of David, of whom it was only reasonable to suppose that there were too many to be found, for him to expect a reign, or his People a government, of present and uninterrupted peace.

"*And they told David, saying, 'That the Men of Jabesh-Gilead were they that buried Saul: and David sent Messengers unto the Men of Jabesh-gilead, and said unto them, 'Blessed be ye of The LORD, that ye have shewed this kindness unto your Lord, even unto Saul, and have buried him! And now The LORD Shew Kindness and Truth unto you! and I also will requite you this kindness, because ye have done this thing: therefore now let your hands be strengthened, and be ye valiant! for your Master Saul is dead, and also the House of Judah have anointed me King over them!'*"—2 Sam ii, second part of 4. 7. Saul had been the salvation, under GOD, of the Men of Jabesh-gilead against the power of the Ammonites, who would only give them peace on the harsh condition of their having every Man his right eye plucked out (1 Sam. xi.); the act of reverence, therefore, shewn by them for the Manes of Saul, was but a debt of gratitude; still, as it was paid at the hazard of the lives of the most valiant of their Men, and paid to the memory only of One, who, having sunk in death, could not thence arise to give thanks to them, such conduct was the more deserving of esteem; and David's was not the Soul that would shrink from the common impulse of humanity, and overlook such an instance of grateful veneration; but his unfeigned and unflinching love for his GOD led him peculiarly to mark it with his approbation, and to associate with that

approbation his prayers for a Blessing from Above on the People that did it, since it was towards the Anointed of The LORD, that this act of patriot dedication was done. Thus were two of the brightest virtues of Christianity prefigured in the conduct of David, "*Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good!*" and "*Submit yourself to all Governors for The LORD'S Sake!*" Maxims that, with reference to Saul, David most sacredly observed, for never was loyalty more tried by persecution, or found more true on the trial; and rarely has the hand of oppression met with a Spirit so unresisting.

"*But Abner, the Son of Ner, Captain of Saul's Host, took Ish-bosheth, the Son of Saul, and brought him over to Mahanaim; and made him King over Gilead, and over the Ashurites, and over Jezreel, and over Ephraim, and over Benjamin, and over all Israel. Ish-bosheth, Saul's Son, was forty years old, when he began to reign over Israel; and reigned two years. But the House of Judah followed David. And the time that David was King in Hebron, over the House of Judah, was seven years and six months.*"—2 Sam. ii. 8. 11. Saul had been called to the government by the peculiar designation of the Prophet of The LORD, which same Prophet declared, that for Saul's disobedience to The DIVINE Injunction The LORD had Rent his Kingdom from him, and had Given it to Another. But for this, therefore, it might seem in its Creation to have been Intended as hereditary; and if Abner knew not What The ALMIGHTY had Revealed by his Prophet, his advancement of One of Saul's Sons to his Father's vacant Throne was a measure of seeming justice and right policy: if otherwise, he was arraying himself in battle against HEAVEN, and seeking to overturn The DIVINE Decrees. But it is observable of David, that, though he had been Anointed of The LORD'S Prophet, on the defection of Saul, yet did he not, even on the Latter's death, and when his beloved Jonathan was removed, either directly or indirectly lay claim to the Crown, but only in the small portion of Judah undertook the Government, and ascended the Throne through the acclamations and at the express invitation of the People. Nor, when thus supported, did he seek to enlarge his dominion by any appeal even to the People of Israel, but for the period of above seven years, contented himself with the power and influence that had been freely yielded to him. Of the peculiar acts of his Government we are not historically informed, but it is only reasonable to infer that it was a Government of wisdom, of peace, and of love. And what a Blessing to a Nation in its remote, as well as immediate effects, is such a Government! and how are we bound to pray that the hearts of Governors, whether paramount or subordinate, should in like manner be Spiritually Guided and Governed; and when the freedom of election is open to us, we should take care to choose Such as set The LORD always before them, and study to please and obey Him, as The KING of Kings, and LORD of Lords!

△ "*And Abner, the Son of Ner, and the Servants of Ish-bosheth, the Son of Saul, went out from Mahanaim to Gibeon: and Joab, the Son of Zeruiah, and the Servants of David went out, and met together by the Pool of Gibeon: and they sat down, the One on the one side of the Pool, and the Other on the other side of the Pool. And Abner said to Joab, 'Let the young Men now arise, and play before us!' And Joab said, 'Let them arise!' Then there arose and went over by number Twelve of Benjamin, which pertained to Ish-bosheth, the Son of Saul, and Twelve of the Servants of David: and they caught every One his Fellow by the head, and thrust his sword in his Fellow's side; so they fell down together; wherefore that Place was called Helkath-hazzurim, which is in Gibeon.*"—2 Sam. ii, 12. 16. Though the meeting was accidental, and an invitation given only for harmless amusements, yet it seems probable that treachery was intended on the one side, and suspected on the other; and hence, though all were sacrificed, those suffered

who least expected it. It was not in the spirit of David, or of Those, who drew counsel from him, (for he appears not to have been himself present on this occasion) to give provocation; but he was not so inconsiderate of his Followers as not to arm them, or not to provide that they should be armed against the secret machinations of his false Friends, as well as the violence of his open Enemies.

*"And there was a very sore battle that day; and Abner was beaten, and the Men of Israel, before the Servants of David. And there were three Sons of Zeruiah there, Joab, and Abishai, and Asahel: and Asahel was as light of foot as a wild roe: and Asahel pursued after Abner: and in going he turned not to the right hand, nor to the left from following Abner: then Abner looked behind him, and said, 'Art thou Asahel?' And he answered, 'I am.' And Abner said to him, 'Turn thee aside to thy right hand, or to thy left, and lay thee hold on One of the young Men, and take thee his armour!' But Asahel would not turn aside from following of him: and Abner said again to Asahel, 'Turn thee aside from following me! Wherefore should I smite thee to the ground? how then should I hold up my face to Joab, thy Brother?' Howbeit, he refused to turn aside; wherefore Abner with the hinder end of the spear smote him under the fifth rib, that the spear came out behind him; and he fell down there, and died in the same place. And it came to pass that as Many as came to the place, where Asahel fell down and died, stood still. Joab also and Abishai pursued after Abner: and the sun went down when they were come to the Hill of Ammah, that lieth before Giah, by the way of the Wilderness of Gibeon. And the Children of Benjamin gathered themselves together after Abner, and became one Troop, and stood on the top of an hill. Then Abner called to Joab, and said, 'Shall the sword devour for ever? knowest thou not, that it will be bitterness in the latter end? how long shall it be then, ere thou bid the People return from following their Brethren?' And Joab said, 'As GOD Liveth, unless thou hadst spoken, surely then in the morning the People had gone up every One from following his Brother.' So Joab blew a trumpet, and all the People stood still, and pursued after Israel no more; neither fought they any more. And Abner and his Men walked all that night through the Plain, and passed over Jordan, and went through all Bithron, and they came to Mahanaim. And Joab returned from following Abner; and when he had gathered all the People together, there lacked of David's Servants nineteen Men and Asahel. But the Servants of David had smitten of Benjamin, and of Abner's Men, so that three hundred and threescore Men died. And they took up Asahel, and buried him in the sepulchre of his Father, which was in Bethlehem. And Joab and his Men went all night, and they came to Hebron at break of day."*—2 Sam. ii, 17 to 32. The success of David's Men was, in effect, David's success, and this victory obtained by them in David's absence, at comparatively so cheap a purchase, was, under the Blessing of DIVINE Permission and Gracious Interposition, the fruit of David's judicious instruction of his Men in the art of war, and the effect of that Parental affection extended by him towards them, which drew from them the devotion of Filial love, and dedicated them voluntarily to the support of his power, even at the hazard of their lives. The reverence in which Joab was held, even by One so powerful and exalted as Abner under the government both of Saul and his Successor, and to whom he was thus hostilely opposed, reflects credit on David, and shews the judgment he exercised in the choice of his Generals; an act of peculiar importance in a King, when the lives and fortunes of so many Individuals, as compose an Army, and the peace and prosperity of a Kingdom, often in a pre-eminent degree depend upon it. But of David's General it is not only observable that he displayed both prudence and courage, but that, won upon occasionally, at least, by the example of his Master, these properties were happily blended with some instances of clemency and with some professions of piety, the most essential qualities, when really

operating, of true greatness, and such as are so calculated to secure The DIVINE Blessing.

△ *"Now there was long war between the House of Saul, and the House of David; but David waxed stronger and stronger; and the House of Saul weaker and weaker. And unto David were Sons born in Hebron: and his first-born was Amnon of Ahinoam, the Jezreelitess; and his second Chileab, of Abigail, the Wife of Nabal, the Carmelite: and the third Absalom, the Son of Maacah, the Daughter of Talmai, King of Geshur: and the fourth Adonijah, the Son of Haggith: and the fifth Shephatiah, the Son of Abital: and the sixth Ithream, by Eglah, David's Wife. These were born to David in Hebron."*—2 Sam. iii, 1 to 5. From the dispositions both of Ish-bosheth, and of Abner, his General, it is probable that these wars were, on the part of David, defensive, but by repeated victories obtained over his Adversaries, their fears would be auxiliaries on his side, and if no increase of territorial power followed, as the immediate consequence of his successes, yet the terror of his arms would establish him a name of high exaltation even among his Enemies, to the diminution and gradual downfall of their own Sovereign's reputation and influence; but still this unaltered tide of success, added to the influx of domestic happiness and prosperity in the rapid enlargement of his family, does not induce him to arrogate to himself an independance on or to withdraw his dutiful and reverential submission and allegiance from his HEAVENLY KING; but, in patience possessing his Soul, to wait in humility the Acceptable Season of The LORD, for the Fulfilment by Him (Whose Promise never Faileth) of those Further Acts of Grace and Goodness, Which had been Prophetically Revealed to him.

△ *"And it came to pass, while there was war between the House of Saul and the House of David, that Abner made ~~made~~ himself strong for the House of Saul. And Saul had a Concubine, whose name was Rizpah, the Daughter of Aiah. And Ish-bosheth said to Abner, 'Wherefore hast thou gone in unto my Father's Concubine?' Then was Abner very wroth for the words of Ish-bosheth, and said, 'Am I a dog's head, which against Judah do shew kindness this day unto the House of Saul, thy Father, to his Brethren, and to his Friends; and have not delivered thee into the hand of David, that thou chargest me to day with a fault concerning this Woman? So do GOD to Abner, and more also, except, as The LORD hath Sworn to David, even so I do to him; to translate the Kingdom from the House of Saul, and to set up the Throne of David over Israel and over Judah, from Dan even to Beer-sheba!' And he could not answer Abner a word again, because he feared him. And Abner sent Messengers to David on his behalf, saying, 'Whose is the Land?' saying also, 'Make thy league with me! and, behold, my hand shall be with thee to bring about all Israel unto thee.' And he (David) said, 'Well, I will make a league with thee; but one thing I require of thee, that is, thou shalt not see my face, except thou first bring Michal, Saul's Daughter, when thou comest to see my face.' And David sent Messengers to Ish-bosheth, Saul's Son, saying, 'Deliver me my Wife Michal! which I espoused to me for an hundred foreskins of the Philistines.' And Ish-bosheth sent, and took her from her Husband, even from Phaltiel, the Son of Laish: and her Husband went with her along weeping behind her to Bahurim. Then said Abner unto him, 'Go, return!' And he returned. And Abner had communication with the Elders of Israel, saying, 'Ye sought for David in times past to be King over you: now then do it! for The LORD hath Spoken of David, Saying, 'By the hand of My Servant David I will Save My People Israel out of the hand of the Philistines, and out of the hand of all their Enemies.' And Abner also spake in the ears of Benjamin: and Abner went also to speak in the ears of David, in Hebron, all that seemed good to Israel, and that seemed good to the whole House of Benjamin. So Abner came to David to Hebron,*

*twenty Men with him: and David made Abner and the Men that were with him feast: and Abner said unto David, 'I will arise and go, and will gather all Israel unto my Lord the King, that they may make a league with thee, and that thou mayest reign over All that thine heart desireth.' And David sent Abner away; and he went in peace."*—2 Sam. iii, 6 to 21. Allied as Abner was to Saul, being the favourite of the same Grandfather, and supported as Ish-bosheth had been by his counsel, the influence, and the arms of Abner, it was weak in Ish-bosheth to criticize the private conduct of Abner, and to hold him up to public reproof and rebuke for so slight an offence or indignity offered to Saul's memory; perhaps this was only the ostensible cause of their disagreement, and Abner, fully, disgusted with the weakness of Ish-bosheth, might have been seeking an occasion for separating from him. Be this as it may, it is here observable that the ALMIGHTY, Who Foreknows even the thoughts of Men, has, in the ordering of His Peculiar Dispensations, Taken Advantage of an incident of natural occurrence, and, though in itself originating in the evil passions of man, Improved it to the production of essential good to His faithful Servant, His Chosen People. Why Abner, himself the support of Ish-bosheth's government, and of whom Ish-bosheth himself stood in fear, did not himself leave the government, rather than seek for David to succeed to the Throne, is attributable to the pious conviction he seems to have entertained of the Divine Judgment and Revelation Favours the Appointment of David. He perceived the fruitlessness of even Saul's efforts to counteract the Determination of the DIVINE Will in David's favour; and to have claimed the Sceptre on the side of Ish-bosheth, would naturally have made David his Enemy, and might have kindled the awful fire of civil insurrection in Israel. Firm to his purpose, he scarcely uttered it, and filled the Monarch himself with the most abject mortification at its avowal, before he begins to put it into execution. To David this was not unknown; upon his first introduction to Saul's Court, David had Abner the highest in influence, next at least to Jonathan, and he was still placed in the exalted Situation of Captain of the Hosts of the King of Israel. The inefficiency of Abner to fulfil the league, he proposed, could hardly have been a matter of doubt, and it obviously did not in the mind of David, for at least he accepts the proposal for a negotiation; but stipulates as a preliminary condition that the Wife, who had been sacrilegiously torn from him, and given to another, as that Other was amenable to the power of the Israelitish King, should be restored to him. Faithless as she had in some sense been condemned by the mandate of an arbitrary and unfeeling Father, David still loved her, and so ardent was this love, that neither absence, nor the devoted affection of Others, endowed with wisdom, and beauty, and fruitful in conjugal affections, were able to shake its constancy; and the possession even of a Kingdom made subservient to its gratification. It may be, indeed, that the wish to restore Michal was made ostensibly so indispensable to prove the sincerity of David in his treaty, or his influence over the People, whom he proposed David to govern; but David's application to Ish-bosheth himself, to obtain the Object of his desire, rather confirms the sincerity of his professions of attachment to her, as paramount even to the government of Israel. In this view, however, it may be questioned whether the private feelings of David were not allowed too much scope, when the power of giving peace and prosperity to a Nation was of secondary consideration. But David, whose insight into Human Nature was profound, and who seems to have possessed the circumspection of the Politician, must have considered that the resumption of the tie, which so intimately connected him with Saul's Family, as the Husband of his Daughter, might have afforded an additional facility to his accession to Saul's Throne, by strengthening



the popular prepossessions in his favour; and Ish-bosheth's ready compliance with David's demand is at least some proof of a strong disaffection already prevailing around Ish-bosheth, for otherwise how with the many Thousands of Israel at his command should he, at this time in particular, dread the Thousands of Judah, and thus manifest publicly his fear of offending David. The purity of Abner's motive, as founded in love for his Country, is inferrable from his not having himself assumed the government, or attempted to influence the People to raise him to it. He did not even seek to divide the Kingdom with David, which, if selfishness had operated with him, would probably have suggested itself to his mind to have proposed, as an experiment at least. Neither, presuming on his own popularity, did he at once proclaim David to be King, as by his appointment; but in the most constitutional and peaceable manner, he convenes the great Men of the State, reminds them of their own wish, before expressed, to have David to rule over them, and exhorts them, to give effect to that wish, by the powerful incentive, religiously avowed, that GOD Himself had Proclaimed Deliverance to Israel through David as the Servant of His Choice. Not only with the ten Tribes of Israel, but with that of Benjamin also, for a season separated therefrom, did Abner use this exhortation (and with Neither was it used in vain) but a general concurrence was manifested in his proposal, and the most abundant testimony thereby was shewn, that All had heard of the Prophecy of The LORD, and devoutly were disposed to believe in It, and submissively to give to It effect; for Abner, it seems, was attended by a Deputation both from Israel and Benjamin to David, to treat with him for the assumption of the undivided Government. And David, whose piety has before been eminently conspicuous, and who would not remove Saul, though repeatedly within his power, now acquiesces in the Public sentiment of The DIVINE Preference being Extended towards him; and acknowledges the sincerity of Abner's profession by hospitably entertaining him, and parting from him with assurances of peace and good-will.

△ *“And, behold, the Servants of David and Joab came from pursuing a Troop; and brought in a great spoil with them; but Abner was not with David in Hebron; for he had sent him away, and he was gone in peace. When Joab, and all the Host, that was with him, were come, they told Joab, saying, ‘Abner, the Son of Ner, came to the King, and he hath sent him away, and he is gone in peace.’ Then Joab came to the King, and said, ‘What hast thou done? behold, Abner came unto thee; why is it that thou hast sent him away, and he is quite gone? Thou knowest Abner, the Son of Ner, that he came to deceive thee, and to know thy going out, and thy coming in, and to know all that thou doest.’ And when Joab was come out from David, he sent Messengers after Abner, which brought him again from the Well of Sirah; but David knew it not. And when Abner was returned to Hebron, Joab took him aside in the gate to speak with him quietly, and smote him there under the fifth rib, that he died, for the blood of Asahel his Brother. And afterward, when David heard it, he said, ‘I and my Kingdom are guiltless before The LORD for ever from the blood of Abner, the Son of Ner: let it rest on the head of Joab, and on all his Father’s House! and let there not fail from the House of Joab, One that hath an issue, or that is a Leper, or that leaneth on a staff, or that falleth on the sword, or that lacketh bread!’ So Joab, and Abishai, his Brother, slew Abner, because he had slain their Brother Asahel at Gibeon in the battle. And David said to Joab, and to all the People, that were with him, ‘Rend your clothes, and gird you with sackcloth, and mourn before Abner!’ And King David himself followed the bier. And they buried Abner in Hebron: and the King lifted up his voice, and wept at the grave of Abner; and all the People wept: and the King lamented over Abner, and said, ‘Died Abner as a Fool dieth? Thy hands were not bound, nor*

*put into fetters : as a Man falleth before wicked Men, so fellest thou !' And the People wept again over him. And when all the People came to cause David meat, while it was yet day, David swore, saying, 'So Do GOD to me, and also, if I taste bread, or ought else, till the sun be down !' And all the People did as it pleased them : as whatsoever the King did, pleased all the People : for all the People and all Israel understood that day, that it was not of the King's will to slay Abner, the Son of Ner. And the King said unto his Servants, 'Know ye that there is a Prince and a great Man fallen this day in Israel ? And I am very weak, though Anointed King : and these Men, the Sons of Zeruiah, be too strong for me : The LORD shall Reward the Doer of evil according to his wickedness.'—2 Sam. iii, 22 to 39.*

However natural was the resentment of Joab against Abner for having slain him of a Brother, yet, as Abner had acted only on the principle of self-defence, and not till he had cautioned Asahel to desist from pursuing him, such resentment was contrary to the honourable feeling that regulates civilized war, and Joab should at least have confined the exercise of it to an open appeal to single combat ; and is execrable for having sunk the Warrior into assassination. His counsel to and remonstrance with David were not from the love of peace, but savage revenge dictated them ; and his object was to have his purpose sanctioned under the express sanction of David, regardless of involving the character of his Master in so black and base a deed. But, though the narrative does not say so, it is as to the answer given by David, it is necessarily implied in the conduct of Joab himself ; and, doubtless, he rejected with firmness the suspicions of his fidelity, which Joab attempted to create in him, and decidedly disapproved any measures indicative of them ; meaning that Abner should continue as he had been suffered to depart, on his journey in peace. David's acquittal at once acquitted Abner of duplicity, though it did not penetrate so far as to detect the murderous design of Joab. The imprecation of DIVINE vengeance on the head of Joab, by a mind so generally pious as David's, is a convincing proof that David had not indirectly and tacitly sanctioned, or even excused the meditated mischief of Joab's heart, for otherwise he would in effect have been asking of HEAVEN the infliction of the same heavy Punishments on his own head ; since he acknowledged GOD to be A Righteous JUDGE, and the secrets of all hearts were open to Him. Had David, therefore, partaken in Abner's guilt, he must have been conscious of being justly amenable to the same sentence of Condemnation. The extreme humiliation to which he subjected himself by directing every eye towards him, as involving the Nation in disgrace, and filling every heart with anguish at the contemplation of his inhospitable and unbecoming conduct, confirm the belief in David's innocence ; for how could Joab, so bold and daring for public and universal obloquy, have forborne implicating him in guilt, had his conduct warranted the accusation ? The funeral oration pronounced by David over the dead body is in the figurative style of Hebrew poetry. Sorrowing at the bare loss of so great a Man, and so valuable, though he had acquired a Friend ; but full of indignation at the execrable manner of his death, David breaks forth into the apostrophic, "*Died Abner as a Fool*" thereby meaning, perhaps, to draw from all Israel the acknowledgment of the character of Abner as a great one, and that it was not in him, like the foolish and Voluntary of folly and vice, to bring on himself destruction. "*Died Abner as a Fool*" Then continuing the oration, as possessed of the answer he desired, and which the People's silence amounted to, and changing the Person, addressing the dead body of Abner, he said, "*Thy hands were not bound ; thy feet were not put into fetters.*" Not as a criminal bound hand and foot, and left up to the just sentence of the Law, was Abner's life taken ; for then

indeed no eye of Judah or of Benjamin might have been called upon to drop a tear at his departure. "*No : as a Man falleth before wicked Men, so fellest thou,*" were the concluding words of what were probably only the heads of this oration. Abner is thus figuratively contrasted with wicked Men ; and in his fall exhibited his own innocence, and purity of motive, and intention, in not even suspecting wickedness and deceit in Others. Thus was an honourable testimony borne by David to distinguished worth and greatness, and this without respect of Persons ; for Joab was high in station in David's own Army ; and stung to the quick, as he must have been, by such a public crimination and reprehension, might have fostered a spirit of revenge to the utter destruction of David himself, since the hand once imbrued unjustly in blood, has thrown down the only barrier (religious fear) against yielding to the most gigantic influence of evil imaginations for the gratification of its passions, or the accomplishment of its ends.

The conduct of David, not only on this occasion, but on all others, gave satisfaction and delight to the People. His views of justice were enlarged and liberal : a measure of it is unquestionably due to the Stranger, as well as the Citizen, and the life of a Fellow-Man, of whatever Country or complexion, is to be held sacred, as Emanating from The Same Gracious GOD, and as Imparted by That GIVER of all Good Gifts for the same great and merciful end, the purification of the body and Soul in Time, that Both may be unspeakably Blest in Eternity.

No power, founded on injustice, is acceptable to a rightly regulated mind. To David, the apprehension of Israel's even suspecting his joining in the conspiracy against Abner, was such as to make him seem to himself to totter on his newly-acquired Throne ; and very feelingly does he lament the craftiness of the Sons of Zeruiah, as Some of those he had taken into his confidence, and acknowledge it to be of a nature above his power to controul ; but consoles himself in the contemplation of DIVINE Protection, concluding with an assertion, as true as it is awful, and of which the influence should be allowed to prevail unceasingly over every heart, since there is no Man that liveth and sinneth not, "*The LORD shall Reward the Doer of evil according to his wickedness :*" though in the Christian it is lawful to mix with it, to the Soul's unspeakable consolation, the hope that, on repentance and amendment, CHRIST will Take away the reproach of our wickedness, by having Suffered, as GOD and Man, in Merciful Mediation for our Salvation, the punishment due, in Immutable Justice, to the evil of our deeds.

△ "*And when Saul's Son heard that Abner was dead in Hebron, his hands were feeble, and all the Israelites were troubled. And Saul's Son had two Men that were Captains of Bands ; the name of the One was Baanah, and the name of the Other Rechab, the Sons of Rimmon, a Beerothite, of the Children of Benjamin ; (for Beeroth also was reckoned to Benjamin ; and the Beerothites fled to Gittaim, and were Sojourners there until this day). And Jonathan, Saul's Son, had a Son that was lame of his feet ; he was five years old when the tidings came of Saul and Jonathan out of Jezreel, and his Nurse took him up and fled ; and it came to pass, as she made haste to flee, that he fell and became lame ; and his name was Mephibosheth. And the Sons of Rimmon, the Beerothite, Rechab and Baanah went, and came about the heat of the day to the House of Ish-bosheth, who lay on a bed at noon : and they came thither into the midst of the house, as though they would have fetched wheat ; and they smote him under the fifth rib ; and Rechab and Baanah, his Brother, escaped. For when they came into the house, he lay on his bed in his bed-chamber, and they smote him, and slew him, and beheaded him, and took his head, and gat them away through the plain all night : and they brought the head of Ish-bosheth unto David to Hebron, and said to the King, ' Behold the head of Ish-bosheth, the*

*Saul, thine Enemy, which sought thy life! and The LORD hath Avenged  
the King this day of Saul and of his Seed,' And David answered Rechab  
mah his Brother, the Sons of Rimmon, the Beerothite, and said unto them,  
'LORD Liveth, Who hath Redeemed my Soul out of all adversity, when  
I me, saying, 'Behold, Saul is dead,' thinking to have brought good tidings,  
old of him and slew him in Ziklag; who thought that I would have given  
reward for his tidings: how much more when wicked Men have slain a  
Person in his own house upon his bed! Shall I not, therefore, now re-  
is blood of your hand, and take you away from the Earth?' And David  
ded his young Men, and they slew them, and cut off their hands and their  
I hanged them up over the Pool in Hebron. But they took the head of Ish-  
and buried it in the sepulchre of Abner, in Hebron.'—2 Sam. iv.*

The holy confidence of David in the Peculiar Providence of A Gracious and  
GOD, is here again observable; and his conviction, that under such Pro-  
no Power could oppose to hurt him, is the principle that every Soul of  
ould zealously strive to cultivate, for that will assuredly bring peace at  
The character of David was at this time, it should seem, unjustly  
ed, and his heart was judged of by the influence of worldly wisdom, as  
p of the same qualities that shew themselves in worldly-minded Men; it  
ught that because he had Enemies, it was not only justifiable, but praise-  
and indeed the sure way to David's patronage and favour, to despatch those  
s by any, the most subtle and diabolical means. David's veneration for  
se of Saul may, to the infidel mind, appear foolishness; but he honoured  
s the King, for The LORD'S Sake, The KING of Kings, by Whom he  
Anointed; and so far from seeking the destruction of Any of his House,  
showed a disposition that was the most generous and praiseworthy towards  
Had Ish-bosheth proposed a treaty of alliance with him, it probably would  
en readily acquiesced in; but it was otherwise Ordained by The LORD  
as, Whose Appointment had been, that David alone should reign over  
as well as Judah: of which Appointment the evil of Man's Nature was  
ide accessory to the fulfilment. Thus is it, that the devices of the wicked  
ften fail as to their own purposes, and GOD, Whose Providence is over  
Works, Elicits Good out of evil, though without Influencing to the work-  
that evil; but on the contrary Giving freely unto all them, that ask it, the  
fectual Guard against the evil workings of the heart, namely, the Purify-  
l Sanctifying Grace of His HOLY SPIRIT; by Which we are Enabled to  
all things unto ourselves, and to overcome the wicked One and all his  
f evil imaginations and unholy desires, through JESUS CHRIST, The  
al David, Whose Mediatorial Sacrifice is Effectual, from the beginning to  
l of Time, to Procure for All That Inestimable Gift, of Which the Fruit is  
on Earth, and good-will towards Man. For in all ages of the World, as  
efore as since the Advent of The Incarnate GOD, and as well where the  
of the Gospel has not shined, as where its pure Brightness has been seen,  
ence has declared to every bosom that no Murderer hath any inheritance in  
ngdom of GOD; proclaiming that as there can be no communion between  
nd darkness, so cannot the impure passions of Man find an Advocate for  
ation even in his own breast, much less access to the Countenance and  
of An All Wise, All Holy, and Perfect GOD.

subtle is the influence of evil upon the heart of Man, when he does  
to The SPIRIT of GOD, by rejecting the Guidance of His Grace, that  
art will sometimes deceive itself into a profession, at least, of working the  
of GOD; though, in fact, it is doing the work of the Devil; as is  
ed in this conduct of the two Sons of Rimmon, who avowed that this their

diabolical act of Regicide was on the contrary the effect of the Peculiar Interposition of DIVINE Justice and Power, to avenge David of his Enemy. How cautious should we be, therefore, against yielding ourselves to the first inclinations to sin, by rejecting the strong admonitions of our conscience! for by degrees that conscience will otherwise become so eventually seared, as to leave us with scarce any impression of our duty; and thus shall we be lost for ever to that, which alone insures the Favour of the ALMIGHTY, and shall, by continuing in sin, become sooner or later amenable to everlasting Punishment, in having both Body and Soul cast into Hell, and Sentenced to endless destruction from the Presence of The LORD, and from the Glory of His Power; and suffering, on the other hand, all the Vengeance of That POWER, and possibly all the tortures of a deranged or distempered mind, without the mitigation of an unconsciousness of that deplorable state.

In the answer of David made to Rechab and Baanah, the most direct and laudable, and exemplary acknowledgment of GOD'S Parental Care of him is made in the words, "*As The LORD Liveth, Who hath Redeemed my Soul out of all adversity.*" Much indeed had David endured; and by the wisdom, and valour, and prudence he displayed, if any Man might have boasted of his own superiority and self-sufficiency, David might have stood excused for doing so, for his struggles had been finally crowned with the fullest success; and Enemies and Friends bore testimony to the excellence of his counsel: but David's wisdom was the fruit of righteousness and holiness of life; and it led him both to seek and acknowledge Help and Counsel from On High. For indeed, what has the Wisest and Mightiest among us, that he did not Receive from Above?

△ "*Then came all the Tribes of Israel to David unto Hebron, and spake, saying, 'Behold, we are thy bone and thy flesh. Also in time past, when Saul was King over us, thou wast he, that leddest out and broughtest in Israel: and The LORD Said to thee, 'Thou shalt feed my People Israel, and thou shalt be a Captain over Israel.' So all the Elders of Israel came to the King to Hebron; and King David made a league with them in Hebron before The LORD: and they anointed David King over Israel.*"—2 Sam. v. 1 to 3., so also 1 Chron. xi. 1 to 3.

Notwithstanding the murder both of Ish-bosheth and Abner, David became the choice of the People of Israel, which the Elders, as the voice of the Nation, proclaimed; thus acquitting David of all suspicion of any participation in or countenance of such evil deeds. Notwithstanding also the removal by death both of the King and his prime Minister, David did not arrogantly assume the Succession to the vacant Throne, or carry either arms or the arts of negotiation into the Land of Israel to obtain the possession of its Kingdom; but in patience he possessed his Soul, and in becoming humility, waited the Acceptable Season of The LORD. Not till the People of Israel sent to him, though he had known from Abner their devotion to him, did David confidently deal with the Crown of Israel as his possession; and even then, he treated with such Deputies, as the Israelites sent, and accepted the Dignity at their hands; and this was done in acknowledged subjection and deference to the Will of GOD, as essentially necessary to the Confirmation of such Appointment. In the extremes both of prosperity and adversity, we thus see that David's piety never forsook him.

"*David was thirty years old, when he began to reign; and he reigned forty years: In Hebron he reigned over Judah, seven years and six months; and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years over all Israel and Judah. And the King and his Men went to Jerusalem, unto the Jebusites, the Inhabitants of the Land, which spake unto David, saying, 'Except thou take away the Blind and the Lame, thou shalt not come in hither:'*" thinking David cannot come in hither. Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion; the same is the City of David. And David

*that day, 'Whosoever getteth up to the gutter, and smiteth the Jebusites, and the Blind, that are hated of David's Soul, he shall be Chief and Captain. So they said, 'The Blind and the Lame shall not come into the house.' So he dwelt in the Fort, and called it the City of David. And David built round about Millo and inward. And David went on, and grew great, and The GOD of Hosts was with him.'—2 Sam. v, 4 to 10., see also to the same Chron. xi, 4 to 9.*

The object of here stating the duration of David's reign, in the instant following account of his Election to the Throne of all Israel, may have been to fix the mind for the multitude of subsequent incidents that were to form the links in the chain of narrative where, generally, no particular dates are introduced into the History. David's recollection of the contempt in which the Jebusites had held him, by taunting him with the insinuation, that, so far

as his Men from having courage or conduct sufficient to enable them to defend their City, and the armed Men in it, they could not even overcome the lame belonging to it, arose and his resentment thereat was natural; the helpless Beings themselves, who were thus thrown prominently forth by the incitement of Others, perhaps, than by their own free will, seemed to David's displeasure, should so peculiarly be marked out by him for retribution, seems one instance, in a great and generally pious Character, of the weaknesses of the Human heart, when it is not in everything and at all times equally and invariably surrendered to the Controul of the love-SPIRIT of GOD. But though David might have sinned in this instance as amongst all the Sons of Men, from Adam downwards, except The Man Himself, is there, that hath not known the occasional influence, at times of iniquity in the heart?) yet did The LORD Put away his sin, and pardon his iniquity no more; for He, to Whose Eye we are as "a glassy mirror," saw the preponderance of good dispositions within him, and it is not GOD of all Mercies to be Extreme to Mark what is done amiss. The rise of David and his advancing power, are indeed expressly attributed to the

Providence and Favour of GOD; for where the love of GOD reigns in the heart through an holy fear, it is impossible that the Protection of GOD should not be Extended, or that He, Who is always more Ready to Hear than to answer, should not be the Helper and Redeemer of All, who put their trust in Him and diligently seek Him. "*Joab went up, and took the City, and repaired it, and David dwelt there.*" 1 Chron. xi, 8. *Chief."* 1 Chron. xi, 8.

*And Hiram, King of Tyre, sent Messengers to David, and cedar trees, and gold, and masons; and they built David an house. And David perceived that the LORD had Established him King over Israel, and that He had Exalted him for His People Israel's sake."—2 Sam. v, 11, 12.*

This manifestation of the respect in which David was held by a neighbour-independent Potentate, is highly creditable to his character. To a Man whose power, by worldly ambition alone, this display by Hiram of the intrinsic worth of his subjects, as Artizans and Mechanics, and of his Country as productive of materials for the comforts and conveniences of life, might have proved a stimulus to the direction of such power, as belonged to David, towards conquest and attainment. But the generous sentiments and conduct of the King of Tyre were not misapplied, when devoted to this King of Israel, who in his heart both abroad and at home, felt and acknowledged himself to be only the creature of The MOST HIGH GOD, Who is Just in all His Dealings, and Who has given the law of uprightness on David's pliant heart. Under the influence of that humility, which is inseparable from true piety, David, though receiving such universal deference and homage paid to him, yet arrogates not to

himself the merit of Unaided Advancement, nor does he consider the establishment of his Government as not having any other cause or object than the Favour he may individually have acquired from HEAVEN, or the gratification of his own feelings, but he regards it as instrumental only to the far more comprehensive Scheme of Benevolence in the ALMIGHTY'S Protection and Exaltation of that People, whom He peculiarly Elected to give honour to his Name, and preserve His Worship upon Earth. The Record of these Occurrences as given in the Book of Chronicles, is as follows: "*Now Hiram, King of Tyre, sent Messengers to David, and timber of cedars, with Masons and Carpenters, to build him an house. And David perceived that The LORD had Confirmed him King over Israel, for his Kingdom was lifted up on high, because of his People Israel.*"—1 Chron. xiv. 1, 2, being in effect the same as that before quoted.

"*And David took him more Concubines and Wives out of Jerusalem, after he was come from Hebron: and there were yet Sons and Daughters born to David; and these be the names of those, that were born unto him in Jerusalem; Shammuah, and Shobab, and Nathan, and Solomon; Ibhar also and Elishua, and Nepheg, and Japhia, and Elishama, and Eliada, and Eliphalet.*"—2 Sam. v. 13 to 16.

David seems to have been formed to win the hearts of Women as well as of Men, and when his victories over the former were not viciously used, it is difficult, perhaps, to bring oneself absolutely to condemn a conduct sanctioned by the then usages of Society, though opposed to the self-denying principle of Christianity, whose purer Spirit of forbearance prompts to a confinement to one Wife only. Communication between the Sexes, by the way, that prevailed in David's time, in the appropriation of several Women to one Man, might, in those comparatively early periods of the History of Mankind, be attended with political benefits in increasing the wealth and opulence of the State by the increase of its Population, particularly amongst the higher orders of Society, where wealth and influence were peculiarly calculated to give protection and intellectual advantages to an Offspring, however numerous. But worldly policy is, certainly, no justification for the infringement of moral rules and DIVINE Injunctions. In these days we have a New Commandment Given us, and Which, in this Country, is confirmed by temporal authority, that each Husband be the Husband of one Wife only, and any indulgence even with a Concubine or Harlot is branded as criminal, and made the subject of punishment. The more extended state of Population at the time this new moral Precept of the Gospel took its rise, may have strengthened the policy of its observance; and the more Spiritual aim of the Gospel Dispensation in general, Which was to make Men of purer hearts, and to fill them with more heavenly affections, was seconded by a regulation so calculated to give encouragement to temperance and chastity. In the Book of Chronicles this part of David's History is thus recorded:—

"*And David took more Wives at Jerusalem: and David begat more Sons and Daughters. Now these are the names of his Children, which he had in Jerusalem; Shammua, and Shobab, Nathan, and Solomon, and Ibhar, and Elishua, and Elpalet, and Nogah, and Nepheg, and Japhia, and Elishama, and Beeliada, and Eliphalet.*"—1 Chron. xiv. 3 to 7.

Elpalet and Nogah are here added to the number; in other respects the numbers and names are substantially the same.

△ "*But when the Philistines heard that they had anointed David King over Israel, all the Philistines came up to seek David: and David heard of it, and went down to the hold: the Philistines also came and spread themselves in the Valley of Rephaim. And David inquired of The LORD, saying, 'Shall I go up to the Philistines? Wilt Thou Deliver them into mine hand?' And The LORD Said unto David, 'Go up! For I will doubtless Deliver the Philistines into thine hand.'*"

David came to Baal-perazim, and David smote them there, and said, 'The LORD hath Broken forth upon mine Enemies before me, as the breach of waters.' And he called the name of that Place Baal-perazim (the Plain of breaches): and they left their images; and David and his Men burned them. And the Philistines came up yet again, and spread themselves in the Valley of Rephaim: and when David inquired of The LORD, He Said, 'Thou shalt not go up; but fetch a compass about, and come upon them over against the mulberry trees: and let it be, when thou hearst the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees, that then thou shalt stir thyself! for then shall The LORD Go out before thee, to Smite the Hosts of the Philistines.' And David did so, as The LORD had Commanded him; and he smote the Philistines from Geba until thou come to Gazer."—2 Sam. v, 17 to 25.

Helpless in their animosity against the Israelites, the Philistines no sooner saw David's establishment on the Throne of that Kingdom, than, like the spirit of evil, they set themselves in array against the Anointed of The LORD, notwithstanding the lesson, which David had been the Instructor in teaching them, that vain is the power of Man, when the Arm of The LORD Upholden in Vengeance against him. But though the Philistines be the HOLY ONE of Israel, and defied His Anointed, yet again and again the same lesson of their impotence and consequent folly of warring against The LORD imparted to them; but imparted to them without producing the salu- tary effects on themselves, which it should seem to have been well calculated to produce; for they continued in their wilful blindness and obduracy of heart, to their own idol-gods, and impiously blaspheming That GOD, from Whom Alone Cometh Salvation. Natural as is an eagerness in Man to renew acquaintance with a Foe he has once vanquished, yet David checked the ardour of natural courage; and, knowing that with The LORD JEHOVAH Alone is the Victory, and with Him it is to Give the Victory, in pious devotion to The LORD's Will, he sought in the Appointed way to have It Revealed to him; and, acquainted with It, as piously resolved to act obediently to It. Nor did he imparted with reference to the immediate occasion of consulting It, on another, however similar and immediately consequent occasion arising, but seriously calculate on the Same Sanction being Given to similar measures, and humbly asked for DIVINE Counsel, and as scrupulously observed It, as the Merit of the Triumph to Whom it was due, The GOD of Battles; con- sidering himself sufficiently honoured in being the Chosen Instrument of The LORD's Power in accomplishing the Salvation of Israel. In the conflicts of our lives, ourselves and our worst enemy "sin," we should do well thus to follow in spirit the example of David; and The SPIRIT of The LORD, Which leadeth us, will, with the pen of our conscience, write on our hearts the Instruc- tion for our conduct, if the Word of The LORD, already publicly revealed to us, hath not under circumstances of such peculiarity Disclosed It. The account in the Book of Chronicles is as follows:—

And when the Philistines heard that David was anointed King over all Israel, the Philistines went up to seek David. And David heard of it, and went out to meet them. And the Philistines came and spread themselves in the Valley of Rephaim. And David inquired of GOD, saying, 'Shall I go up against the Philistines? and will Thou Deliver them into mine hand?' And The LORD said to him, 'Go up! For I will Deliver them into thine hand.' So they came to Baal-perazim; and David smote them there. Then David said, 'GOD hath Broken forth upon mine Enemies by mine hand, like the breaking forth of waters: and they called the name of that Place Baal-perazim (that is, a Place of breaches). And when they had left their gods there, David gave a commandment, and they were burned with fire. And the Philistines yet again spread themselves



*abroad in the Valley. Therefore David inquired again of GOD; and GOD Said unto him, 'Go not up after them! turn away from them, and come upon them over against the mulberry trees! and it shall be, when thou shalt hear a sound of going in the tops of the mulberry trees, that then thou shalt go out to battle; for GOD is Gone forth before thee to Smite the Host of the Philistines.' David, therefore, did as GOD Commanded him; and they smote the Host of the Philistines from Gibeon even to Gazer. And the fame of David went out into all Lands; and The LORD Brought the fear of him upon all Nations."*—1 Chron. xiv, 8 to 17.

David's instantaneous destruction of the Heathen idols was an act of equal wisdom and piety. The concluding verse in the above reference is superadded to the account in the Book of Samuel. It might seem to be a natural consequence of David's repeated successes over the Nations he personally opposed, that other Nations, to whom the tidings of his conquests were borne, should dread to come in contact with him; but History, both sacred and general, prove this not to have universally prevailed. The implanting that dread, therefore, in the breast of People, who had not tried their skill and valour with David, while it manifested the Power of GOD over the hearts of Men, was an Instance of DIVINE Mercy to Man, in giving, by the same means, rest unto Israel, and the saving of blood to Nations that were, perhaps, less criminal in the Eyes of GOD, than the Philistines.

△ *"Again David gathered together all the chosen Men of Israel, thirty thousand and David arose and went with all the People that were with him, from Baale of Judah, to bring up from thence the Ark of GOD, Whose Name is called by the Name of The LORD of Hosts, That Dwelleth between the Cherubims. And he set the Ark of GOD upon a new cart, and brought It out of the house of Abinadab that was in Gibeah: and Uzzah and Ahio, the Sons of Abinadab, drove the new cart; and they brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was at Gibeah accompanying the Ark of GOD: and Ahio went before the Ark. And David and the House of Israel played before The LORD on all manner of instruments made of fir wood, even on harps, and on psalteries, and on timbrels, and on cornets, and on cymbals."*—2 Sam. vi, 1 to 5.

Notwithstanding the honours and the triumphs that attended on David, his heart was not led away by these generally intoxicating influences, but continued steadfast, immovable, and always abounding in The LORD, forasmuch as he knew that all would be nothing worth, and all his labour be in vain toward acquiring for him substantial happiness without the Continuing Favour of his GOD. Having triumphed over his Enemies by the Help of DIVINE Power, he, therefore, bestirs himself to manifest in the most seemingly Acceptable way to That GOD, the genuine piety and gratitude of his heart, and render, at the same time, the most beneficial service to His People, by seeking to restore to Israel the Ark of GOD'S Covenant of Love and Mercy, the Emblem of His Power and the Assurance of His Protection: and to this great work he calls from all four quarters of his Kingdom the choicest of his People, to testify, before his GOD, the consciousness of the great service he was entering upon, and impress on the People's minds the sacredness of that, in which they were called upon to join. Amidst the array of arms, surrounding at a respectful distance this inestimable treasure, to inspire dread into the hearts of All, who might wish to obstruct its removal, David forgot not to associate with the procession the incitement to holy and reverential love, which is found in the influence of sacred music over the conscious Soul of Man. And in this part of the solemn dedication to GOD, as well as in the military regulations, David himself showed conspicuously and exemplarily pre-eminent; all the energies of his Soul were pressed into the service of his MAKER, and the Majesty of wisdom and

were exemplified in the presence and conduct of a King. The observation of Bishop Horne, in his Commentary on the Psalms, on the excellency and of sacred music, may be, with reference to this example of David, satisfactorily consulted. The account given of this Occurrence in the 1 Chronicles is substantially the same; but it may be satisfactory here to set them, and shew at one view their accordance.

*And David consulted with the Captains of Thousands and Hundreds, and every Leader: and David said unto all the Congregation of Israel, 'If it seem to you, and that it be of The LORD our GOD, let us send abroad unto our men every where, that are left in all the Land of Israel, and with them also to the Levites, which are in their Cities and suburbs, that they may gather us unto us: and let us bring again the Ark of our GOD to us; for we did not at It in the days of Saul.' And all the Congregation said 'that they do so.' For the thing was right in the eyes of all the People. So David gathered all Israel together, from Shihor of Egypt, even unto the entering of Hemath, and brought the Ark of GOD from Kirjath-jearim. And David went up and all to Baalah, that is, to Kirjath-jearim, which belonged to Judah, to bring up the Ark of GOD, The LORD, That Dwelleth between the Cherubims, whose Name is Called on It. And they carried the Ark of GOD in a new cart, which was the house of Abinadab: and Uzza and Ahio drove the cart. And David and his men played before GOD with all their might, and with singing, and with harps, and with psalteries, and with timbrels, and with cymbals, and with trumpets."—1 Chron. xiii, 1 to 8.*

In the above words, "if it be of The LORD, our GOD," give an added Text to the observation in the above account: the work proposed to be done, without all Human considerations, so utterly free from the seeming possibility of offence to Him, Whose Honour it was chiefly in contemplation to promote, that it might, to a less devout and spiritualized mind than David's, be taken to be a work of supererogation to ask The DIVINE Permission for its execution. But David knew that to obey, was better than sacrifice, and to obey, than the fat of rams; he had seen the effect of self-righteousness in the case of Saul, and, therefore, with a mind bent on submission to The DIVINE Will, he set himself diligently to inquire of The LORD, that he might have That Revelation to him.

*And when they came to Nachon's threshing floor, Uzzah put forth his hand to hold the Ark of GOD, and took hold of It: for the oxen shook It: and the Anger of The LORD was Kindled against Uzzah; and GOD Smote him there for his error; and he died by the Ark of GOD. And David was displeased, because The LORD had Made a Breach upon Uzzah; and he called the name of the place Uzzah to this day. And David was afraid of The LORD that day, and said, 'How shall the Ark of The LORD come to me?' So David would not bring the Ark of The LORD unto him into the City of David; but David carried it into the house of Obed-edom, the Gittite."—2 Sam. vi, 6 to 10.*

That the Ways of GOD are the Ways of Wisdom, All His Works Declare: how shall we enter into the Depths of His Counsel? Whether He, Whose Province it is to Look into the heart, Saw in that of Uzzah a want of holy reverence for the Things Pertaining unto GOD, however contrary might be Man's natural judgment? or whether He was Desirous of Impressings, on the minds of the people around, the awe that should be cherished in approaching the Depository of The DEITY'S Covenant of Grace with Man, and to Teach them, from the fate of Uzzah, that GOD Needeth not the help of His Creatures, and that far more able to Him is a dependance upon His Omnipotence, than an arrogant estimation of Human power, as supposing that the Hand of The LORD was

Shortened, that It could not Save, or His Ear Deaf, that He could not Hear? or whatever may have reconciled the Summary Judgment of GOD with the perfection of Justice which Resides within Him; certain it is, that if Uzzah in spirit offended not, it was no Unmerciful Sentence to translate him from Earth to Heaven; and if he did offend, yet, awful as was the temporal Judgment Inflicted on him, yet may we trust that in the Judgment to Come in That Kingdom, Which is not of this World, he may find Mercy. The effect produced on the mind of David by this Infliction of DIVINE Chastisement, is a manifestation of the pride of Man, even amidst the general prevalence of holiness that may belong to him, and confirms the sad truth of the degeneracy of our Nature from the state of purity and entire resignation to the Will of GOD, in which that Nature was first Formed. The holy David *displeased* with The ALMIGHTY!!! he, "*with whom GOD was Well Pleased,*" as being "*a Man after His Own Heart,*" became offended at That GOD, through Whom he lived and moved, and had his Being, and on Whose Good Pleasure Depended his fate, not only in Time but in Eternity. Because GOD Seeth not as Man seeth, and the Wisdom of The CREATOR was above the Creature's comprehension, in the hasty and arrogant dictate of reasoning pride, the Ways of The LORD were protested against, and even condemned as uneven; and David, who had so lately and exemplarily done honour to GOD, and proclaimed His Infinite Goodness and Mercy, now withdrew that submissive homage to His Will, which he had before been foremost to excite in the minds of Others: a fear, not such as leadeth to love, pervaded his Soul, and instead of seeking Counsel of The LORD, how His Displeasure might be Removed, he stifled for a moment the Emotions of The HOLY SPIRIT within him, and gave way to the evil suggestions of his own weak heart. It would have been becoming in him, and consistent with the general tenour of his past Life, to have devoted himself in abstinence and prayer, and to have encouraged his People to the same course, that the Anger of The LORD, however unsuspectingly yet, doubtless, justly Roused, might not be Extended from an Individual to a People; but, alas! who knoweth how oft he offendeth? and how fervently should every One ask of GOD in prayer, what the pious David himself, at another time, taught both his own and succeeding Generations in this penitential appeal to his GOD and our GOD, "*O cleanse Thou me from my secret faults!*" Still David did not abandon the Sacred Testimony of The ALMIGHTY'S Intercourse with His People; he did not so unbridle his displeasure as to leave it without check or controul, but removed the Ark to a place of shelter, though as it should seem to the dwelling-place of an Infidel Philistine; but the Ark had some time past been preserved in Philistia, and David, fearing to take It prematurely home, lest It might Bring destruction and not Salvation to himself and his People, suffered It, for a further season, to remain in that Land. The Account given of this in the Book of Chronicles is as follows:—

*"And when they came unto the threshing floor of Chidon, Uzza put forth his hand to hold the Ark; for the oxen stumbled: and the Anger of The LORD was Kindled against Uzza, and He Smote him, because he put his hand to the Ark; and there he died before GOD. And David was displeased, because The LORD had Made a Breach upon Uzza: wherefore that Place is called Perez-Uzza to this day. And David was afraid of GOD that day, saying, 'How shall I bring the Ark of GOD home to me?' So David brought not the Ark home to himself to the City of David; but carried it aside into the house of Obed-edom, the Gittite."—1 Chron. xiii, 9 to 13.*

It is not improbable that the Will of The LORD, that no hand should dare to touch the Ark on Its journey, had been Revealed; and the Revelation communicated to Uzza; if so, the distrust of GOD'S Power to Protect His Own Works, and the arrogant presumption in deeming Man's aid essential to the

rk's support, vindicate the Ways of GOD to Man in the instance of Uzza's sudden and exemplary Punishment. (See 1 Sam. vi, 19.)

*"And the Ark of The LORD continued in the house of Obed-edom, the Gittite, three months: and The LORD Blessed Obed-edom and all his Household. And it was told King David, saying, 'The LORD hath Blessed the House of Obed-edom, and all that pertaineth unto him, because of the Ark of GOD.' So David went and brought up the Ark of GOD from the house of Obed-edom into the City of David with gladness. And it was so, that when they, that bare the Ark of The LORD, had gone six paces, he sacrificed oxen and fatlings: and David danced before The LORD with all his might; and David was girded with a linen phod. So David and all the House of Israel brought up the Ark of The LORD with shouting and with the sound of the trumpet. And as the Ark of The LORD came into the City of David, Michal, Saul's Daughter, looked through a window, and saw King David leaping and dancing before The LORD; and she despised him in her heart. And they brought in the Ark of The LORD, and set It in his place, in the midst of the Tabernacle, that David had pitched for It: and David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before The LORD. And as soon as David had made an end of offering burnt offerings and peace offerings, he blessed the People in the name of The LORD of Hosts. And he dealt among all the People, even among the whole multitude of Israel, as well to the Women as Men, to every One a cake of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine. So all the People departed every One to his house. Then David returned to bless his Household. And Michal, the Daughter of Saul, came out to meet David, and said, 'How glorious was the King of Israel to day, who uncovered himself to day in the eyes of the Handmaids of his Servants, as One of the vain Fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself!' And David said unto Michal, 'It was before The LORD, Which Chose me before thy Father, and before all his House, to Appoint me Ruler over the People of The LORD, over Israel: therefore will I play before The LORD: and I will yet be more vile than thus, and will be base in mine own sight: and of the Maid-servants, which thou hast spoken of, of them shall I be had in honour.' Therefore Michal, the Daughter of Saul, had no Child unto the day of her death."—2 Sam. vi, 11 to 23.*

The Countenance of The LORD, That is Strength, and in His Favour is the Blessedness of the Life that is, as well as of That which is to come. Obed-edom was probably a righteous Man, though bred in the prejudices of a false faith. Whether the temporal benefits resulting to him from the effects of the Ark's presence in his house, as the Fruit of DIVINE Love, worked in him a change to the true faith in worshipping The ONE Only GOD, and wrought for him Spiritual Salvation, is matter of conjecture. It would be well, if temporal prosperity, which cannot be without DIVINE Permission, and in every variety floweth from DIVINE Goodness, were in all cases made subservient to Spiritual and Everlasting purposes. And, since we have All of us the Presence of The HOLY SPIRIT in our Souls, if we do not quench It by blasphemy, or indifference, or endeavour to pervert Its Merciful and Gracious Aim to give us peace on Earth and joy in Heaven, That HOLY SPIRIT, Whose benign Influence was Foreshadowed by this sacred Ark of the Israelites, will Bring Blessings home to our Souls, in comparison of which the temporal wealth of Obed-edom was as the shadow to the substance.

The motive, that revived in David's mind the wish to remove the sacred Receptacle of the DIVINE Commandments, to the City of the People, to whom those Commandments were Delivered, after he had been once induced to leave the removal incomplete, is ingenuously ascribed to that dictate of the heart, which is prevalent over all others—self-love; and on this occasion the fear of DIVINE Wrath gave way to the hope of DIVINE Favour. David witnessed

the gracious effects flowing from the bare possession of the Ark even upon an Heathen and an Infidel; and without its being necessary to attribute to David any feeling of the base passion of envy at Another's prosperity, we see him wrought upon to take that Fountain of Blessedness away. David knew The SOURCE from Whence that Fountain Itself Sprung, and, Destined, as in Its origin It was, to refresh the hallowed Land of Judea, it was only natural in him to seek to bring back Its streams to their former channel. If in his hasty abandonment of this precious Treasure, because The DIVINE Displeasure had been Manifested, David had done exceedingly amiss, The LORD, he knew, Who is not Extreme to Mark what is done amiss, was Ready to Put away his sin from him. His resolution, therefore, was wisely taken to throw himself on the Mercy of his GOD: and, to inspire confidence in his Attendants, that they might not shrink from their office at the apprehension of the Omnipotence of GOD being again Displayed in Chastisement, David assumed the voice and action of Gladness; recollecting too, that from the want of some propitiatory sacrifice, and taught by the Mosaic Law that "*without shedding of blood,*" there is no Remission of sins (by which the Shedding of the Precious Blood of CHRIST for that Great and Comprehensive Object, and its Glorious Attendant, the Sanctification of the Soul unto Honour in a fitness for Heavenly Things, was Typified), David prepares a free-will offering unto The LORD; and, aware that whatsoever we do, we should do all to the Glory of GOD, praises him in the dance. With the Pure all things are pure, and attitudes and gestures, corresponding with the flow of harmony, did not disgrace a King in the eyes of his People, when directed to the manifestation of faith in the Greatness and Goodness of GOD. Only in the proud spirit of Saul's Daughter was this seeming descent of David to familiarity with his Subjects held objectionable and degrading; but equality in Spiritual things is of the essence of true Religion; and when contemplating the Power of The KING of Heaven, Who Created all Things, and by Whom all Things Subsist, how can we deny that the mightiest Monarch upon Earth is indebted, equally with the Lowest of his Vassals, for that Supply of Spiritual Assistance, without a pious exercise of which it is vain to hope for Favour in the Sight of The LORD: and the more knowledge a mind possesses of Things, that Savour of The SPIRIT, the deeper will be the state of humiliation, into which it will throw itself to acknowledge its sense of GOD'S Superior Power and Excellence, and that no Man can be justified in His Sight, but must trust to His Mercies; and One, so wisely tutored in humility, will not find in his own Soul a desire, or even a thought, of arrogating superiority over the Souls of Others. David had, it seems, the confidence of hope, that his endeavours would be crowned with success, and prepared, therefore beforehand, a tent for the Ark's reception, and for the refreshment for all the attendant People of Israel. What an august picture does this give of a Royal Triumph in a Holy Cause—a Procession comprising tens of Thousands of Israel, hallowing the beginning and ending of their march with dedicatory rites to The GOD of their worship, and solemnizing its progress with the voice of melody and the action of delight: and after the last sacrifice, the King coming forward, as GOD'S Vicegerent, and pronouncing a Benediction in the fire of eloquence and fervour of holy love on His People. And all this too for an object, which in spirit it is equally practicable for every One to obtain, the inestimable Benefit of the Spiritual Reign within us by the Countenance and Favour of An Ever Present GOD; for which, therefore, we should as earnestly seek; and when received, should gratefully acknowledge, and as piously use. But large as was David's bounty to his People, and ardent as had been his service in their cause, yet was he not left without the means or the inclination to diffuse joy and comfort to the Circle of his domestic retirement. But Michal

uld not be comforted, by reason of that false pride, to which she yielded her rship; and lest a Stock should spring from so unpromising a Root, That GOD, hose is the fruit of the womb, Shut up hers in barrenness. Thus instancing : truth, that pride goeth before a fall, it cost Michal the Favour of her LORD : Heaven and of her Lord upon Earth; and she, who might have been envied r all of her Sex, in her Generation, for the love that David bore to her, and r honourable connection with him, fell from the fondness of his embraces to k into a state of comparative celibacy and neglect—the Victim of that pride : had foolishly cherished—the Mock of those who had envied her—and the ey of Self-condemnation. David's answer to her opprobrious accusation of a was in the spirit of That Wisdom, which cometh from The FATHER of Light. *'t was before The LORD:'* and whatever is so consecrated is to be held Holy. *What GOD hath Cleansed, That call not thou common!'* What He hath Con- sended to Accept, do not thou unfavourably regard! *"I will yet be more vile m thus, and will be base in mine own sight."* What an exemplary profession is of the duty of humility in our dealings with The ALMIGHTY! Though rvid had once manifested displeasure at His Judgment upon Another, yet with ference to himself did he think no state of humiliation and trial too great. He at humbleth himself shall be exalted; and before honour is humility; for the ughty looks shall be brought low: and in David and Michal these truths were verally exemplified.

In the Book of Chronicles the effect of the continuance of the Ark in the use of Obed-edom is in like manner recorded:—

*"And the Ark of GOD remained with the Family of Obed-edom in his house wres months. And The LORD Blessed the House of Obed-edom and all that he ad."*—1 Chron. xiii, 14.

The account of the subsequent removal of the Ark, as contained in the Book of Chronicles, is more circumstantial than that in the Book of Samuel, and is as llovs:—

*"And David made him houses in the City of David, and prepared a place for e Ark of GOD; and pitched for It a Tent. Then David said, 'None ought to rry the Ark of GOD, but the Levites; for them hath The LORD Chosen to carry e Ark of GOD, and to minister unto Him for ever.' And David gathered all rael together to Jerusalem, to bring up the Ark of The LORD unto his place, hich he had prepared for It. And David assembled the Children of Aaron and e Levites: of the Sons of Kohath; Uriel the Chief, and his Brethren an hundred and twenty: of the Sons of Merari; Asaiah the Chief, and his Brethren two hundred and twenty: of the Sons of Gershom; Joel the Chief, and his Brethren an hundred and thirty: of the Sons of Elizaphan; Shemaiah the Chief, and his Brethren two hundred: of the Sons of Hebron; Eliel the Chief, and his Brethren four score: of e Sons of Uzziel; Amminadab the Chief, and his Brethren an hundred and twelve. And David called for Zadok and Abiathar, the Priests, and for the Levites, for Uriel, Asaiah, and Joel, Shemaiah, and Eliel, and Aminadab, and said unto them, *'Ye are the Chief of the Fathers of the Levites; sanctify yourselves, both ye and our Brethren! that ye may bring up the Ark of The LORD GOD of Israel unto he Place that I have prepared for It. For because ye did it not at the first, The LORD, our GOD, Made a Breach upon us, for that we sought Him not after due Order.' So the Priests and the Levites sanctified themselves to bring up the Ark of The LORD GOD of Israel. And the Children of the Levites bare the Ark of OD upon their shoulders with the staves thereon, as Moses commanded according e Word of The Lord. And David spake to the Chief of the Levites to appoint heir Brethren to be the Singers with instruments of music, psalteries, and harps, nd cymbals, sounding, by lifting up the voice with joy. So the Levites appointed**

*Heman, the Son of Joel; and of his Brethren, Asaph, the Son of Berechiah; and of the Sons of Merari their Brethren, Ethan, the Son of Kushaiah; and with them their Brethren of the second degree, Zechariah, Ben and Jaaziel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel and Unni, Eliab and Benaiah, and Maaseiah and Mattithiah, and Elipheleh, and Mikneiah, and Obed-edom, and Jeiel, the Porters. So the Singers, Heman, Asaph, and Ethan, were appointed to sound with cymbals of brass: and Zechariah, and Aziel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Unni, and Eliab, and Maaseiah, and Benaiah with psalteries on Alamoth: and Mattithiah, and Elipheleh, and Mikneiah, and Obed-edom, and Jeiel, and Azariah, with harps on the Sheminith to excel. And Chenaniah, Chief of the Levites, was for song; he instructed about the song, because he was skilful: and Berechiah and Elkanah were Doorkeepers for the Ark. And Shebaniah, and Jehoshaphat, and Nethaneel, and Amasai, and Zechariah, and Benaiah, and Eliezer, the Priests did blow with the trumpets before the Ark of GOD: and Obed-edom and Jehiah were Doorkeepers for the Ark. So David and the Elders of Israel, and the Captains over Thousands, went to bring up the Ark of the Covenant of The LORD out of the house of Obed-edom with joy. And it came to pass, when GOD Helped the Levites, that bare the Ark of the Covenant of The LORD, that they offered seven bullocks and seven rams. And David was clothed with a robe of fine linen, and all the Levites, that bare the Ark, and the Singers, and Chenaniah, the Master of the song, with the Singers: David also had upon him an Ephod of linen. Thus all Israel brought up the Ark of the Covenant of The LORD with shouting, and with sound of the cornet, and with trumpets, and with cymbals, making a noise with psalteries and harps. And it came to pass, as the Ark of the Covenant of The LORD came to the City of David, that Michal, the Daughter of Saul, looking out at a window, saw King David dancing and playing; and she despised him in her heart. So they brought the Ark of GOD, and set It in the midst of the Tent, that David had pitched for It; and they offered burnt sacrifices and peace offerings before GOD. And when David had made an end of offering the burnt offerings and the peace offerings, he blessed the People in the Name of The LORD. And he dealt to every One of Israel, both Man and Woman, to every One a loaf of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine. And he appointed Certain of the Levites to minister before the Ark of The LORD, and to record; and to thank and praise The LORD GOD of Israel: Asaph the Chief, and next to him Zechariah, Jeiel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Mattithiah, and Eliab, and Benaiah, and Obed-edom: and Jeiel with psalteries, and with harps; but Asaph made a sound with cymbals; Benaiah also and Jahaziel, the Priests, with trumpets continually before the Ark of the Covenant of GOD. Then on that day David delivered first this Psalm, to thank The LORD, into the hand of Asaph and his Brethren. 'Give thanks unto The LORD! Call upon His Name! Make known His Deeds among the People! Sing unto Him! Sing Psalms unto Him! Talk ye of All His Wondrous Works! Glory ye in His Holy Name! Let the heart of Them rejoice, that seek The LORD! Seek The LORD and His Strength! Seek His Face continually! Remember His Marvellous Works, that He hath Done, His Wonders, and the Judgments of His Mouth; O ye Seed of Israel, His Servant; ye Children of Jacob, His Chosen Ones! HE is The LORD, our GOD; His Judgments are in all the Earth. Be ye mindful always of His Covenant; the Word, Which He Commanded to a thousand Generations; even of the Covenant, Which He Made with Abraham, and of His Oath unto Isaac; and hath Confirmed the Same to Jacob for a Law, and to Israel for an Everlasting Covenant, saying, 'Unto thee will I Give the Land of Canaan, the Lot of your Inheritance, when ye were but few, even a few, and Strangers in it:' and when they went from Nation to Nation, and from one Kingdom to another People: He Suffered no Man to do them wrong; yea, He Reproved Kings for their sakes, saying, 'Touch not Mine Anointed, and do*

*ly Prophets no harm!* Sing unto The LORD, all the Earth! Shew forth from day to day His Salvation! Declare His Glory among the Heathen; His Marvelous Works among all Nations! For Great is The LORD, and greatly to be praised: He also is to be feared above all gods; for all the gods of the People are idols. But The LORD Made the Heavens: Glory and Honour are in His Presence: Strength and Gladness are in His Place. Give unto The LORD ye hundreds of the People, give unto The LORD Glory and Strength! Give unto The LORD the Glory due unto His Name: bring an offering, and come before Him! Worship The LORD in the beauty of Holiness! Fear before Him all the Earth! The World also shall be stable, that it be not moved. Let the Heavens be glad, and let the Earth rejoice; and let Men say among the Nations. 'The LORD Reigneth:' at the Sea roar, and the fulness thereof: let the Fields rejoice, and all that is therein! Then shall the Trees of the Wood sing out at the Presence of The LORD, because He Cometh to Judge the Earth. O give thanks unto The LORD! For He is Good; for His Mercy Endureth for Ever; and say ye, 'Save us, O GOD for our Salvation, and Gather us together, and Deliver us from the Heathen, that we may give thanks to Thy Holy Name, and glory in Thy Praise! Blessed be The LORD GOD of Israel for Ever and Ever!' And all the People said, 'Amen!' and praised The LORD."—1 Chron. xv, and xvi from 1 to 36.

From this account it seems probable that David consulted the Oracle of GOD, in like manner as he did on the hostility of the Philistines being directed against him, whether he should go up to fetch the Ark of the Covenant of GOD to His holy City; and in what way the removal of It would be Acceptable to Him, Who Seeth not as Man seeth. The choice of the Levites, the peculiar direction for their sanctifying themselves, the preparation and dedication of the Sacrifices, marked a mind deeply impressed with a reverential sense of the value of the Ark—but still more deeply, a sense of the Higher Value of The ALMIGHTY'S Favour, as on That Depended whether the Ark should bring to Israel prosperity, as unto Obed-edom, or desolation, as unto Uzzah. The order and arrangement of the different Bands and Companies forming the Procession—the stated periods for offering of Sacrifice—the influence of sacred music, backed by such holy love in David himself, all concurred to diffuse over the minds of his People the sacredness of the Treasure, they were seeking to recover; and to cherish in their Spirits an awful conviction of the Continual Presence and Irresistible Power of That GOD, Whose Covenant with them the Ark inclosed, and of Whose Promise of Mercies towards them the Ark was the Depository. Nor was David's care of the Ark, when obtained and lodged in his City, less pious and observable than that employed in Its removal; thus admonishing us that a Service, to be well pleasing in the Sight of GOD, should be a continuing and a consistent Service, and that the heart, truly devoted unto Him, is not content to serve Him by fits and starts, but is ever mindful of the Honour due unto His Name. The most memorable record of this most pious office of David, in the removal of the Ark, and which marks the false view that Michal took of it, and confirms, beyond the possibility of doubt, the perfect reverence and devotional feelings with which the Procession was conducted, is the Hymn, which David composed for, and which was first used on the occasion: It is a Composition big with the most exalted piety, and characteristic of a most Spiritually Illuminated mind. In its opening he invokes the just feeling and acknowledgment of gratitude in All present with him on so grand and solemn an occasion; and, in manifestation of this feeling, he calls upon them to put forth their energies of mind and body—to awaken in themselves a recollection of The DIVINE Goodness and Mercy, that they should speak of the Excellent Greatness, That Belongs to their CREATOR, and with the sweet voice of joy



should praise Him as their REDEEMER and SANCTIFIER; heightening their melody with instruments of music. And, Oh, that all Men would in like manner, and with like spirit, "*praise The LORD for His Goodness, and declare the Wonders That He Doeth for the Children of Men!*" With a heart actuated by the most Parental influence, King David then goes on in this Hymn to exhort his Companions and Subjects to "*seek The LORD (as we should do) while, haply, He may be Found; and to seek the Salvation of His Strength, while It is nigh;*" for vain is the arm of flesh, unless The ALMIGHTY Nerve it with an Emanation from His SOVEREIGN Power. And as the Countenance of The LORD, when Beaming with Satisfaction or Mercy (which It invariably and unfailingly does towards All who, with godly sincerity and holy reverence, look unto It for the Blessing of Support and Protection) is the Assurance of Salvation, This Inestimable Good David instructs his Followers (and us through them) to seek continually, that the desire of It should be ever uppermost in our hearts, and the study to attain It our chiefest and most indefatigable occupation. After this general admonition and exhortation, which Gentiles and Christians, as well as Jews, should hail, in grateful memorial of this highly inspired Counsellor and King, David points to the Peculiar Blessings and Deliverances in The DIVINE Dispensations Vouchsafed to the Israelitish People; and in that Revelation of The DIVINE Will, and Communication of DIVINE Wisdom, Which are Recorded in the Oracles of GOD, The Holy Scriptures. After enumerating Many of GOD'S Providences for the Jews, and feeling with a Soul that looked Prophetically on the Great Benefits Thereby Accrued and Accruing to, and still further Reserved for Mankind at large, he then again breaks out into this beautiful apostrophe, "*Sing unto The LORD, all the Earth! Shew forth from day to day His Salvation: declare His Glory among the Heathen; His Marvellous Works among all Nations!*" Anxious as was David to recover for himself and his own People the Ark, as the Sacred Pledge of GOD'S Especial Care, yet was he not a Monopolist of The DIVINE Favour, but zealous that the Nations of the Heathen, by forsaking their idols, should become Converts to the true Faith; and that all the Earth should have the knowledge of The LORD, and share the Brightness of His Countenance and the Might of His Protecting Arm, by "*seeking The LORD and His Strength, and seeking His Face continually,*" David then declares why the idols should be deserted, and The LORD JEHOVAH Alone be worshipped, since "*He Made the Heavens,*" which are above the Earth; since, also, "*Glory and Honour are in His Presence, Strength and Gladness in His Sanctuary.*" Then immediately addressing Those around him, the Royal Psalmist calls upon them, as the Kindred of the People Israel, "*to give glory to GOD in the Highest,*" to dedicate the free-will offerings of their sanctified hearts unto Him, "*and to worship Him in the beauty of Holiness.*" And with a direction of thought, as flowing with more rapidity than lightning, from a contemplation of the Greatness and Stupendous MAJESTY of HEAVEN, he says, "*Fear before Him all the Earth!*" inculcating from his own conviction of the Omnipotence of The MOST HIGH, the salutary lesson of reverential awe towards Him, before Whom the very Devils tremble. But then again returning to the more acceptable contemplation of The DIVINE Goodness, and the Diffusion of the Tenderest Mercies over all GOD'S Works, he calls upon all Creation, Spiritual as well as Natural, Celestial as well as Terrestrial, to unite in spreading the praises of That GOD, Who is KING of Kings and LORD of Lords, and Who Ruleth over all the Nations of the Earth. "*Let the Heavens be glad, and let the Earth rejoice, and let Men say among the Nations, 'The LORD Reigneth!'*" All, indeed, that are in Heaven, are continually gladdened with the conviction of the great Truth, that A GOD, so Abundant in Mercy, and of so

Power, The Very CENTRE and SOURCE of Wisdom and Truth, for Ever and Ever; for Thence is it that the Angels and all the Hosts derive their excellency and their happiness. Nor is the obligation of joy to rejoice in the same confession less, since all we have of peace and joy, is from Heaven, That Awaits us in the Endless Life that is Promised to the Righteous, and of which the hope sheds the brightest and most cheering beam upon our souls. Here, is of the Gift and unrecompensed Goodness of This SOVEREIGN UNIVERSE. Fired as David's Soul was with the sublimest dictate of poetry, and alone with an intellectual offering of the meed of praise to The Great FOUNTAIN of Intelligence is the Royal Psalmist satisfied, but he thus calls upon the immortal Nature to join in the grand Hallelujah Chorus of pious gratulation; *Let The LORD GOD Omnipotent Reigneth. "Let the Sea roar, and the things thereof; let the Fields rejoice, and all that is therein;"* and in the boldness of imagination, he declares as the consequence *"Then shall the Trees of the Forest sing out at the Presence of The LORD;"* assigning as a further reason, *"For He Cometh to Judge the Earth."* Senseless as the Waters of the Sea and the dry Lands of the Fields in themselves obviously are, yet, when applied figuratively they very beautifully may be, to the various Beings under the care of Man occupying or inhabiting them, and all of which, in their various ways, are, more or less, in their Creation and Preservation depositary of Portions of the Goodness of GOD, they may reasonably be considered as manifesting in their order, and as far as their faculties empower them, a sense of the Blessings Imparted to them. But the mention of these grand Objects of Divine Wisdom, and Goodness, all exerted towards Man's benefit, was well calculated to act as texts of holy admonition unto Man, to glorify his "GOD, Who has Done His Marvellous Works that They ought to be had in remembrance." Most especially should That Stupendous Work of Mercy, the Sacrifice of The Only BEGOTTEN SON of GOD, in Expiatory Atonement for Man's transgression, and in manifestation of DIVINE Mercy to his Everlasting Glorification, be treasured in the minds in contemplation of that great Day when, to Fix the Destinies of the World, *"The LORD Cometh to Judge the Earth."* Thus having awakened his soul to a deep sense of their temporal and Spiritual welfare, and pointed with the fervor of adoration and praise to The Great SOURCE of Such Transcendent Blessings, David renews his invocation to pious gratitude in these words, *"We thank thee unto The LORD; for He is Good; for His Mercy Endureth for ever. And say ye, 'Save us, O GOD of our Salvation, and gather us together, and deliver us from the Heathen, that we may give thanks to Thy Holy Name, and praise Thy Praise!'"* That The LORD is Gracious, and that His Mercies are manifold in His Works, who can deny? and how, therefore, can we, who so largely have enjoyed Those Mercies, and who have the sure Promise of Salvation on the condition of believing and of serving Him, withhold the tribute of our praise from Him, Who has so Loved us, as that He hath Given His Only Begotten SON to Die for us, and through Him, might have Everlasting Life? What David in piety to the GOD of Israel, and in Patriarchal regard for the Spiritual welfare of the Church of Israel, said unto them, The HOLY SPIRIT of GOD, through him, with infinitely more Anxious Interest for every Soul of Man, Saith unto us All, *"We thank thee unto The LORD, for He is Good; for His Mercy Endureth for ever."* Admonishing us in like manner to address Him with the heart of simple faith and with a holy consciousness of the equal Necessity and Efficacy of The DIVINE REDEEMER, and with a vital acknowledgment that That REDEEMER is JESUS, The CHRIST, The HOLY ONE of GOD, The Only BEGOTTEN of The FATHER, Equal with The FATHER as Touching The GOD-

HEAD, and Forming, with the FATHER and The HOLY SPIRIT, The TRIUNE GOD, unto Whom we should thus pray, "Save us, O GOD of our Salvation, and Gather us together in Thine Own Appointed Time into Thy Holy Communion, and Deliver us from the power and influence of Satan and of all Spiritual evil, and especially Deliver us from ourselves, and from all sinful purposes and propensities, and Sanctify us by the Graces of Thy HOLY SPIRIT for the Sake and through the Merits and Intercession of Thine Only SON, our LORD and SAVIOUR JESUS, The CHRIST, that we, with heart and voice, with every disposition and faculty of the Soul and body, may Acceptably give thanks to Thy Holy Name, and glory in Thy praise!"

After having thus taught and exhorted his People to pray, David concludes this Divinely Inspired and universally applicable Hymn with this pious apostrophe, "*Blessed be The LORD GOD of Israel for Ever and Ever!*" thereby exciting in the minds of his Hearers, what should be a never-failing disposition of mind in us, not only at one place or on one occasion, but consistently and unceasingly, at all times, and in every situation, and under every circumstance, whether of prosperity or adversity, to *bless The LORD, GOD of our Salvation, since His Mercy Endureth for Ever!*

And as the epilogue to this interesting exhibition between David and his People, and in evidence of the success of a pious example set by One in authority to those over whom he had influence; and as an encouragement to Others so to use the Power so Sacredly Entrusted to them, and in honourable testimony also of the devout spirit of the Israelites at that time, it is recorded of them, that "*All the People said 'Amen,' and praised The LORD.*" The Amen used by a pious heart, short and speedily uttered as is the word, yet does it comprehend, and echo back as it were, and is a virtual adoption of all that has been previously delivered; being a solemn admission of its truth, and a hearty concurrence in its aim, and in the promotion of its end. And what a grand and animating Scene to the Spiritually-Minded does this general Dedication of High and Low, Young and Old, Learned and Unlearned, Soldier and Priest, King and People, to The One GOD of the Universe, The FOUNTAIN of Goodness, The CENTRE of Mercy, and The SOURCE of Salvation, present! How glorious, How full of encouragement the example! How lively a picture, as far as the heart's contracted vision of conception can view it, does it offer of That Holy Celebration of DIVINE Love by Angels and Saints in That KINGDOM, Which is above this World, and Whither we are Encouraged perpetually to direct our goings, that haply we may eventually join Therein, and in this Heavenly Hymn of Praise, "*Holy, Holy, Holy, LORD GOD ALMIGHTY, Which Was, and Is, and Is to Come! Thou art Worthy, O LORD, to Receive Glory, and Honour, and Power: for Thou hast Created all Things, and for Thy Pleasure They are and were Created.*"

The Hymn, thus composed by David, will be found amongst the Collection of Psalms going by his Name, and used in our Church Service. (See Ps. cv, 1 to 15; xcvi throughout; and cvi, 1; cvii, 1; cxviii, 1; cxxxvi, 1; cvi, 47, 48.)

△ In continuation of what followed David's removal of the Ark to Jerusalem, and in manifestation of the pious regard entertained by him for It, it is said, "*So he left there before the Ark of the Covenant of The LORD Asaph and his Brethren, to minister before the Ark continually, as every day's work required: and Obed-edom with their Brethren, three score and eight; Obed-edom also the Son of Jeduthun, and Hosah to be Porters: and Zadok the Priest, and his Brethren the Priests, before the Tabernacle of The LORD in the High Place, that was at Gibeon, to offer Burnt Offerings unto The LORD, upon the Altar of the Burnt Offering, continually morning and evening, and to do according to All, That is Written in the*

*of The LORD, Which He Commanded Israel; and with them Heman and Juthun, and the Rest that were chosen, who were expressed by name, to give thanks The LORD, because His Mercy Endureth for Ever: and with them Heman and Juthun with trumpets and cymbals for Those that should make a sound, and with musical instruments of GOD. And the Sons of Jeduthun were Porters. And all the People departed, every Man to his house: and David returned to bless his house."*—1 Chron. xvi, 37 to 43.

In this holy Convocation and Ordinance of the pious King David we see, first, the appointment of Those, whose Office was to record the Dictates of DIVINE Inspiration, and to compose the Hymns of praise and thanksgiving to the LORD GOD of Israel; and of these Asaph was Chief. These were to minister before the Ark, from day to day, with Seraphic watchfulness and unremitting zeal for the prevalence of DIVINE Truth, and the promotion of DIVINE peace. Next were the Singers and Musicians, with the Bearers of the consecrated vessels about the Altar, used in the Divine Service; and last, though not least, were the sacred Priesthood, the Chosen Ministers of GOD'S Word, and the aides to His Holy Worship. Having thus put all things in order for the reverential worship of The LORD of All, the religious Assembly was dissolved, and Each departed for his home, doubtless bearing to his Family and his indred sentiments in sympathy with those of the holy David, and which his example had been so accessory to the inspiring,—sentiments teeming with thankfulness to GOD, and with adoration for His Mercies. To his own home David so returned, but not with spirits exhausted, though so much previously exercised; he returned to bless his Household, and what brighter beams of comfort and of joy could be shed upon them, than those, which his own heart, amidst the conscious Favour of his GOD, reflected. In the Life to Come, which will now no end, every instant will be past in the contemplation of DIVINE Wisdom and the admiration of DIVINE Goodness. Why, therefore, should the same occupation be unsuited to this Life, which is the season of Preparation for the Other? If the Service of GOD be at any time unacceptable to us, we may be assured that our heart is not right within us; and we should, therefore, devoutly pray to our HEAVENLY FATHER, *that He would Give us a new heart and Renew a right Spirit within us*; that, whether in public or in private, at the Church or in the closet, we may *set Him always before us*; and *that it may be our meat and drink to do His Will*, and our study to teach our Children so; *that we and our House may serve The LORD, and be ever mindful of His Covenant of Mercy*. Through the influence and example of David, his was, with but few exceptions, a Household of Faith. His piety was not that of the outward Man, put on merely to catch the praise of Men, but it was the prevailing affection in his heart; and, though he spread it abroad for the nourishment and succour of his People generally, he did not withhold its favouring aid from his most familiar Friends; to the Objects of his fondest affection, and to whom all his thoughts were unbosomed, he revealed the Consolations of Religion; and administered, with all the endearing influence of Conjugal and Parental feeling, instruction in the way of righteousness, inculcating a holy confidence, through prayer, *in Him Who Heareth prayer, and Who is The Saviour of All, that put their trust in Him*. With such blessings David returned to bless his House.

*"And it came to pass, when the King sat in his house, and The LORD had Given him rest round about from all his Enemies, that the King said unto Nathan the Prophet, 'See now, I dwell in an house of cedar, but the Ark of GOD dwelleth within curtains.' And Nathan said to the King, 'Go, do all that is in thine heart! for The LORD is with thee.'"*—2 Sam. vii, 1 to 3.

The honour of his GOD was ever uppermost in the mind of David. Res-

pected himself for his wisdom, and virtue, and valour, yet was he desirous that nothing in him or around him should derogate from the higher reverence due to his GOD. It came, therefore, into his heart to build a Temple to the Glory of GOD, which, in splendour and majesty of appearance, should leave the rich palace of David as nothing in the comparison; but commendable as should have seemed Such an Object, and laudable the motive, yet David's zeal was no without knowledge; for aware that "*to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams,*" he would not undertake even so pious a work, without first consulting the Priest as the conceived Oracle of GOD. That Prophet, remarking, as he must have done, the Peculiar Favour with which David had been Visited from On HIGH, and imagining that so pious a disposition could not but be Acceptable to GOD, at once, and without any previous consultation with The HOLY GHOST, Who "*Spake by the Prophets,*" sanctioned David's following the holy dictate of his heart. "*But Man seeth not as GOD Seeth.*"

The account in the Book of Chronicles is thus rendered:—

"Now it came to pass, as David sat in his house, that David said to Nathan, the Prophet, '*Lo, I dwell in an house of cedars; but the Ark of The Covenant of The LORD remaineth under curtains.*' Then Nathan said unto David, '*Do all that is in thine heart! for GOD is with thee.*'"—1 Chron. xvii, 1 to 2. The perfect coincidence of this narrative with that in the Book of Samuel calls not for further observation.

"And it came to pass that night, that the Word of The LORD Came unto Nathan, Saying, '*Go and tell My Servant David, Thus Saith The LORD, 'Shalt thou build Me an House for Me to Dwell in? Whereas I have not Dwelt in any House, since the time, that I Brought up the Children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day; but have Walked in a Tent and in a Tabernacle. In all the Places, wherein I have Walked with all the Children of Israel, Spake I a Word with any of the Tribes of Israel, whom I Commanded to feed My People Israel, saying, 'Why build ye not Me an House of Cedar?' Now, therefore, so shalt thou say unto My Servant David, Thus Saith The LORD of Hosts, 'I Took thee from the Sheeps-cotes from following the sheep, to be Ruler over My People, over Israel: and I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have Cut off all thine Enemies out of thy sight, and have Made thee a great name, like unto the name of the great Men that are in the Earth: Moreover I will Appoint a Place for My People Israel, and will Plant them, that they may dwell in a Place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the Children of wickedness afflict them any more, as before-time, and as since the time that I Commanded Judges to be over My People Israel; and have Caused thee to rest from all thine Enemies. Also The LORD Telleth thee, that He will Make thee an house. And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy Fathers, I will Set up thy Seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will Establish his Kingdom. He shall build an House for My Name, and I will Stablish the throne of his Kingdom for ever: I will be his FATHER, and he shall be My Son. If he commit iniquity, I will Chasten him with the rod of Men, and with the stripes of the Children of Men: but My Mercy shall not Depart away from him, as I Took It from Saul; whom I Put away before thee. And thine House and thy Kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy Throne shall be established for ever.' According to all These Words, and according to all this Vision, so did Nathan speak unto David.*'"—2 Sam. vii, 4 to 17.

∴ In the Great Purposes of DIVINE Wisdom it was, that the fulness of Terrestrial Glory should not Shine forth in the time of King David among the People of Israel. In the days of the Son of that King was the Temple of The LORD to be built, when the reign of Peace prevailed. But the Spirit of Prophecy was here manifested, and the Reign of The PRINCE of Peace, and

a Temple not made with hands, which is Eternal in the Heavens, being the abitation of The HOLY GHOST, were figuratively Pointed to; and the blessed Promise of The Kingdom of CHRIST, Which Giveth Prosperity and happiness to All, Who are loyal Subjects of It, was Held out to the hope of him on whose loins, as in the flesh, CHRIST, The SON of GOD and the SAVIOUR of Man, was to Spring.

The Book of Chronicles furnishes the following narrative :—

*"And it came to pass the same night, that the Word of GOD Came to Nathan, saying, 'Go and tell David, My Servant, Thus Saith The LORD, 'Thou shalt not build me an House to Dwell in: for I have not Dwelt in an House since the day that I Brought up Israel unto this day: but have Gone from Tent to Tent and from one Tabernacle to Another. Wheresoever I have Walked with all Israel, Spake I Word to any of the Judges of Israel, whom I Commanded to feed My People, saying, 'Why have ye not built Me an House of Cedars?' Now, therefore, thus saith the LORD unto My Servant David, Thus Saith The LORD of Hosts, 'I Took thee from the sheepcote, even from following the sheep, that thou shouldest be Ruler over My People Israel: and I have been with thee whithersoever thou hast walked; and have Cut off all thine Enemies from before thee, and have Made thee a name as the name of the great Men, that are in the Earth. Also, I will Ordain a Place for My People Israel, and will Plant them, and they shall dwell in their Place, and shall move no more: neither shall the Children of wickedness waste them any more, at the beginning, and since the time that I Commanded Judges to be over My people Israel: Moreover, I will Subdue all thine Enemies: Furthermore, I tell thee, that The LORD will Build thee an House. And it shall come to pass, when thy days be expired, that thou must go to be with thy Fathers, that I will Raise up by Me after thee, which shall be of thy Sons; and I will Establish his Kingdom: he shall build Me an House, and I will Stablish his Throne for Ever: I will be his FATHER, and he shall be My Son: and I will not Take My Mercy away from him, as I Took It from him that was before thee: but I will Settle him in Mine House and in My Kingdom for Ever! and his Throne shall be Established for evermore.' According to all these Words, and according to all this Vision, so did Nathan speak unto David."*—1 Chron. xvii, 3 to 15.

This seems more Exclusively Applicable to The MESSIAH, The SON of David; and the Omission of the Passage in the Book of Samuel, *"If he commit iniquity,"* which could have no reference to Him, strengthens the divided application to JESUS and to Solomon. An Instance of the double edge of prophecy.

*"Then went King David in, and sat before The LORD, and he said, 'Who am I, O LORD GOD? and what is my House, that Thou hast Brought me hitherto? and This was yet a Small Thing in Thy Sight, O LORD GOD: but Thou hast Spoken also of Thy Servant's House for a great while to come. And is this the manner of Man, O LORD GOD? And what can David say more unto Thee? for Thou, LORD GOD, Knowest Thy Servant. For Thy Word's sake, and according to Thine Own Heart, hast Thou Done All These Great Things, to make Thy Servant know Them. Wherefore Thou art Great, O LORD GOD: for there is None like Thee; neither is there any God beside Thee, according to All that we have heard with our ears. And what one Nation in the Earth is like Thy People, even like Israel (whom GOD Went to Redeem for a People to Himself, and to Make Him a Name, and to Do for you Great Things and Terrible, for thy sake, before Thy People), which Thou Redeemedst to Thee from Egypt, from the hands of their gods? For Thou hast Confirmed to Thyself Thy People Israel to be a People unto Thee for ever: and Thou, LORD art Become their GOD. And now, O LORD GOD, the Word That Thou hast Spoken concerning Thy Servant,*

and concerning his House, Establish it for ever ! and Do as Thou hast Said ! And Let Thy Name be magnified for Ever, saying, ' The LORD of Hosts is The GOD over Israel : and Let the House of Thy Servant David be Established before Thee ! for Thou, O LORD of Hosts, GOD of Israel, hast Revealed to Thy Servant, Saying, ' I will Build thee an House : ' therefore hath Thy Servant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto Thee. And now, O LORD GOD, Thou art That GOD, and Thy Words be True, and Thou hast Promised This Goodness unto Thy Servant. Therefore now Let it Please Thee to Bless the House of Thy Servant, that it may continue for ever before Thee ! for Thou, O LORD GOD, hast Spoken It ; and with Thy Blessing Let the House of Thy Servant be Blessed for ever.' "—2 Sam. vii, 18 to 29.

In the Book of Chronicles the account is thus :—

" And David, the King, came and sat before The LORD, and said, ' Who am I, O LORD GOD, and what is mine House, that Thou hast Brought me hitherto ? And yet This was a Small Thing in Thine Eyes, O GOD ; for Thou hast also Spoken of Thy Servant's House for a great while to come, and hast Regarded me according to the estate of a Man of high degree, O LORD GOD ! What can David speak more to Thee for the honour of Thy Servant ? for Thou Knowest Thy Servant. O LORD, for Thy Servant's sake, and according to Thine Own Heart, hast Thou Done All This Greatness, in Making Known All These Great Things. O LORD, there is None like Thee, neither is there any God beside Thee, according to All, That we have heard with our ears. And what one Nation in the Earth is like Thy People Israel (whom GOD Went to Redeem to be His Own People), to Make Thee a Name of Greatness and Terribleness, by Driving out Nations from before Thy People, whom Thou hast Redeemed out of Egypt ? For Thy People Israel didst Thou Make Thine Own People for ever : and Thou, LORD, Becamest their GOD. Therefore now, LORD, Let the Thing That Thou hast Spoken concerning Thy Servant, and concerning his House, be Established for ever ! and Do as Thou hast Said ! Let it even be Established, that Thy Name may be Magnified for ever, Saying, ' The LORD of Hosts is The GOD of Israel, even A GOD to Israel : and Let the House of David, Thy Servant, be Established before Thee ! For Thou, O my GOD, hast Told Thy Servant, that Thou wilt Build him an House : therefore Thy Servant hath found in his heart to pray before Thee. And now, LORD, Thou art GOD, and hath Promised This Goodness unto Thy Servant : now, therefore, Let it Please Thee to Bless the House of Thy Servant, that it may be before Thee for ever ! for Thou Blessest, O LORD, and it shall be Blessed for ever.' "—1 Chron. xvii, 16 to 27.

In the conclusion of these two Scriptural passages the only observable distinction seems to present itself; the one being imprecatory of everlasting Blessing from GOD on the House of David; the other Prophetically predictive that such Mercy would be, Spiritually at least, Vouchsafed unto it; the one the offspring of humility of mind, as dictated by the lowly estate of self-estimation; the other the fruit of the fulness of faith in the Fulfilment of the Promises of GOD; each being perfectly compatible with the other.

That David was not actuated by worldly ambition, by a thirst for the praise of Men, but by a deep sense of the Greatness and Goodness of GOD, and an ardent desire to conform to His Will, and confidently to repose in His Word of Promise, is obvious from his conduct on this memorable occasion. He had wished to exemplify his gratitude to his DIVINE GUARDIAN and PROTECTOR for all the Mercies Vouchsafed unto him; and the Prophet of The LORD had at first sanctioned that wish. If any feeling of vanity had taken possession of David's mind on this occasion, and he had looked forward to his name being had in repute by future Generations, this was a trial, that in the ready submission he

paid to The DIVINE Will, marked the paramount principles of piety and humility in his heart; he knew *“that obedience is better than sacrifice;”* that *Heaven was properly GOD'S Throne, and the whole Earth but His Footstool.* With becoming resignation, therefore, David at once yielded to The DIVINE Appointment, without assuming to reason with his GOD, or repining at His Decree. In the largest expectation and hope of David's heart, there had not so much as a thought entered into it of so Great Goodness as This, Which The ALMIGHTY was Pleased to Promise to him and his Posterity: and yet David was not *faithless, but believing.* And, indeed, the devout aspirations poured forth by him on this holy Communion with his GOD—the lowliness of himself in his own eyes—and the just view he takes of the Transcendant Mercies and Love of The MOST HIGH,—the beautiful apostrophe he breaks out into, in an avowal, that *The GOD of his worship was The Only True GOD; that His Words are Verity and Truth; and that His Promise never Fails,* are an admirable Model on which our thoughts, when holding converse with GOD, may be happily framed. To give a becoming solemnity to his awful intercourse with his MAKER, he withdrew to the Place of Public Worship; *“he went in and sat before The LORD,”* and opened his address by acknowledging his own nothingness and unworthiness of Regard in the Sight of *“Him, before Whom the Heavens Themselves are not Pure, and Who Chargeth His Angels with folly.”* David felt that The LORD in the Loving-Kindness He had previously Manifested unto him, had abundantly Shewed His Mercy towards him; but when, to Such Proofs of DIVINE Favour, were added Promises of Everlasting Honour and Glory to him and his Posterity, Which David saw (perhaps, though as it were, through a glass darkly) had Reference to the Spiritual and Eternal KINGDOM of JESUS CHRIST, his heart was too full of gratitude and admiration for Earthly language to express; he, therefore, confines himself to that communion with his MAKER which most resembles, perhaps, the intuitiveness of Angels, and which, to the Omniscience of GOD, is equally Intelligible as the voice of a Multitude. *“What can David say more unto Thee? for Thou, LORD GOD, Knowest Thy Servant.”*

*“And after this, it came to pass that David smote the Philistines, and subdued them: and David took Gath-ammah out of the hand of the Philistines. And he smote Moab, and measured them with a line; casting them down to the ground; even with two lines measured he to put to death, and with one full line to keep alive. And so the Moabites became David's Servants, and brought gifts. David smote also Hadadezer, the Son of Rehob, King of Zobah, as he went to recover his Border at the River Euphrates: and David took from him a thousand chariots, and seven hundred Horsemen, and twenty thousand Footmen: and David houghed all the chariot-horses, but reserved of them for an hundred chariots. And when the Syrians of Damascus came to succour Hadadezer, King of Zobah, David slew of the Syrians two and twenty thousand Men. Then David put Garrisons in Syria of Damascus; and the Syrians became Servants to David, and brought gifts. And The LORD Preserved David whithersoever he went. And David took the shields of gold, that were on the Servants of Hadadezer, and brought them to Jerusalem: and from Bethah, and from Berothai, Cities of Hadadezer, King David took exceeding much brass. When Toi, King of Hamath, heard that David had smitten all the Host of Hadadezer, then Toi sent Joram, his Son, unto King David to salute him, and to bless him, because he had fought against Hadadezer, and smitten him; for Hadadezer had wars with Toi. And Joram brought with him vessels of silver and vessels of gold, and vessels of brass: which also King David did dedicate unto The LORD, with the silver and gold, that he had dedicated of all Nations which he subdued; of Syria and of Moab, and of the Children of Ammon, and of the Philistines, and of Amalek, and of the spoil of Hadadezer, Son of Rehob, King of*



Zobah. And David gat him a name, when he returned from smiting of the Edom in the Valley of Salt, being eighteen thousand Men. And he put Garrisons in Edom; throughout all Edom put he Garrisons; and all they of Edom David's Servants. And The LORD Preserved David whithersoever he went. 2 Sam. viii, 1 to 14.

The account in the Chronicles is as follows:—

"Now after this, it came to pass that David smote the Philistines, and he took Gath and her Towns out of the hand of the Philistines: smote Moab: and the Moabites became David's Servants, and brought gifts. David smote Hadarezer, King of Zobah, unto Hamath, as he went to stab dominion by the River Euphrates: and David took from him a thousand chariots and seven thousand Horsemen, and twenty thousand Footmen: David also had all the chariot-horses, but reserved of them an hundred chariots. And when Syrians of Damascus came to help Hadarezer, King of Zobah, David slew Syrians two and twenty thousand Men. Then David put Garrisons in Damascus; and the Syrians became David's Servants, and brought gifts. The LORD Preserved David whithersoever he went. And David took the shields that were on the Servants of Hadarezer, and brought them to Jerusalem: and from Tibhath and from Chun, Cities of Hadarezer, brought David very much wherewith Solomon made the brazen sea and the pillars, and the vessels of brass. When Tou, King of Hamath, heard how David had smitten all the Host of Hadarezer, King of Zobah; he sent Hadoram, his Son, to King David, to inquire of his welfare, and to congratulate him, because he had fought against Hadarezer, smitten him (for Hadarezer had war with Tou); and with him all manner of vessels of gold, and silver, and brass. Then also King David dedicated unto the LORD, with the silver and the gold that he brought from all these Nations Edom and from Moab, and from the Children of Ammon, and from the Philistines and from Amalek. Moreover Abishai, the Son of Zeruiah, slew of the Edomites in the Valley of Salt, eighteen thousand. And he put Garrisons in Edom; and the Edomites became David's Servants. Thus The LORD Preserved David whithersoever he went."—1 Chron. xviii, 1 to 13. The reference to Solomon's appropriation of the brass taken by David, shews the fulfilment of his Father's hallowed purpose.

Amidst the brilliancy of his conquests, and himself, on one occasion a victim made the Victim of that passion to which the violence of a state of warfare too frequently and fatally gives rise, in inflicting cruelty on animals uncondemned of offence, (unless, as some Commentators think, the Text will bear the correction, that the chariots and not the horses were disabled, for the word "horses" seems not to have been in the original Text, though the context rather confirms it), David never forgot Whose was the Victory, nor to Whom, therefore, to be the Glory; for of the richest of the spoil he reserved to make a Sacrifice to the LORD; not being Forbidden, like Saul, so to do: and the precious fruits of his piety were Salvation from On HIGH, for "The LORD Preserved David whithersoever he went." And The Same Merciful Care in Spiritual, if temporal, Salvation also is Extended over every Soul of Man, whether Governed or Governed, where there is faith in the Blessed Promises of GOD, and where faith is added Christian love and charity.

△ "And David reigned over all Israel: and David executed judgment and equity unto all his People. And Joab, the Son of Zeruiah, was over the Host; Jehoshaphat, the Son of Ahilud, was Recorder: and Zadok, the Son of Ahithophel, the Son of Abiathar, were the Priests; and Seraiah was the Chief of the Priests; and Benaiash, the Son of Jehoiada, was over both the Cherethites and the Pelishtines: and David's Sons were Chief Rulers."—2 Sam. viii, 15 to 18.

The account in the Book of Chronicles is as follows :—

*"So David reigned over all Israel, and executed judgment and justice among all his People. And Joab, the Son of Zeruiah, was over the Host: and Jehoshaphat, the Son of Ahilud, Recorder: and Zadok, the Son of Ahitub, and Abimelech, the Son of Abiathar, were the Priests; and Shavsha was Scribe: and Benaiah, the Son of Jehoiada, was over the Cherethites and the Pelethites; and the Sons of David were Chief about the King."*—1 Chron. xviii, 14 to 17.

David's was not an abstract unsocial piety, it did not withdraw him from his Fellow-Man, nor induce him to shrink from those duties, to which the rights and interests of a Community give rise. Called to the august Seat of Judgment as the Vicegerent of GOD over GOD'S Own People, he executed the high Office with diligence and fidelity, with discretion and impartiality, neither withholding from the Poor, nor perverting for the Rich the dispensations of justice, but shewing that None were too high for the power of the Law to reach, and None too low for its zeal to disregard. The selection of Officers, on which the wisdom of a Government, and consequently the happiness of a People, so much depend, was, probably, such as reflected credit on the King's discernment; and his appointment of his own Sons to be Rulers over Provinces or Districts shews the King's earnestness to render service to the Public, not only by his own Personal exertions, but by Those, over whom None Other but himself might be supposed to have influence, as being next in Rank to Majesty itself. He would not allow them to waste in indolence and luxury that time, on which he knew their fate in Eternity depended; and, supporting Parental authority by the most exemplary conduct, both as a Governor and a Judge, appointed his Children to fill Offices of usefulness in the State; doubtless instilling into them those lessons of purity and piety, of wisdom and righteousness, which might reflect back the splendour they derived from the Throne, and promote the prosperity of its Subjects.

*"And David said, 'Is there yet Any that is left of the House of Saul, that I may shew him Kindness for Jonathan's sake?' And there was of the House of Saul a Servant, whose name was Ziba. And when they had called him unto David, the King said unto him, 'Art thou Ziba?' And he said, 'Thy Servant is he.' And the King said, 'Is there not yet Any of the House of Saul, that I may shew the Kindness of GOD unto him?' And Ziba said unto the King, 'Jonathan hath yet a Son, which is lame on his feet.' And the King said unto him, 'Where is he?' And Ziba said unto the King, 'Behold, he is in the House of Machir, the Son of Ammiel, in Lo-Debar.' Then King David sent, and fetched him out of the house of Machir, the Son of Ammiel, from Lo-Debar. Now when Mephibosheth, the Son of Jonathan, the Son of Saul, was come unto David, he fell on his face and did reverence. And David said, 'Mephibosheth!' And he answered, 'Behold thy Servant!' And David said unto him, 'Fear not! for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan, thy Father's sake, and will restore thee all the Land of Saul, thy Father; and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually.' And he bowed himself and said, 'What is thy Servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog, as I am?' Then the King called to Ziba, Saul's Servant, and said unto him, 'I have given unto thy Master's Son all that pertained to Saul and to all his House. Thou, therefore, and thy Sons, and thy Servants shall till the Land for him, and thou shalt bring in the fruits, that thy Master's Son may have food to eat: but Mephibosheth, thy Master's Son, shall eat bread always at my table.' Now Ziba had fifteen Sons and twenty Servants. Then said Ziba unto the King, 'According to all that my Lord the King hath commanded his Servant, so shall thy Servant do.' 'As for Mephibosheth,' said the King, 'he shall eat at my table as One of the King's Sons.' And Mephibosheth had a young Son, whose name was Micha. And all that dwell in the house of Ziba were Servants unto Mephibosheth. So Mephibosheth*

*dwelt in Jerusalem: for he did eat continually at the King's table; and on both his feet."*—2 Sam. ix.

This incident is not noted in the Chronicles.

Many as had been the incidents in David's life since the death of S few as, in a worldly point of view, were the grounds for David's v memory with reverence by extending favours to his Descendants, Dav not that Spirit, which rendereth evil for evil, but contrariwise blessing had he learnt the Law of his GOD, though the Pure Doctrines of ( Charity and Forbearance and Love and Mercy were then but imy foreshadowed. In the magnanimity of Christian heroism, however, David of invoking a Spirit of civil discord, by raising up against himself a De of Royalty for the disaffected of the Land to patronize, calls generally for the Lineage of Saul, with the intention of doing them a Kindness: the d of a Son of his beloved Jonathan was, probably, as unlooked for, as acceptable to him; and a more distinguishing mark of that love he bore J and of the gratitude he continued to feel for him, though in the grav not have been exhibited than by the adoption of that Son as a Child of and the Royal endowment so generously made him. The modesty of bosheth himself heightens the interest of this picture of Regal munific Manly virtue. No haughty independance is assumed, no sullen envy, feasted, no arrogant pretensions to equal or superior power are exhib jealousy at the rise of one Family on the downfall of his own appears; the contrary, the most pious resignation to the Will of HEAVEN is she the most honourable testimony borne to the Justice of The DIVINE A of David.

△ *"And it came to pass after this, that the King of the Children of Amn and Hanun, his Son, reigned in his stead. Then said David, 'I will shew unto Hanun, the Son of Nahash, as his Father shewed kindness unto me David sent to comfort him by the hand of his Servants for his Father. And Servants came into the Land of the Children of Ammon. And the Prince Children of Ammon said unto Hanun, their Lord, 'Thinkest thou that Da honour thy Father, that he hath sent Comforters unto thee? hath not Dav sent his Servants unto thee, to search the City, and to spy it out, and to oi it?' Wherefore Hanun took David's Servants and shaved off the one hal beards, and cut off their garments in the middle, even to their buttocks, and s away. When they told it unto David, he sent to meet them, because the A greatly ashamed. And the King said, 'Tarry at Jericho, until your b grown, and then return!' And when the Children of Ammon saw that th before David, the Children of Ammon sent and hired the Syrians of Bet and the Syrians of Zoba, twenty thousand Footmen, and of King Maacah a t Men, and of Ish-tob twelve thousand Men. And when David heard of it Joab, and all the Host of the mighty Men. And the Children of Amm out, and put the battle in array at the entering in of the gate: and the Sy Zoba, and of Rehob, and Ish-tob, and Maacah, were by themselves in t. When Joab saw that the front of the battle was against him before and be chose of all the choice Men of Israel, and put them in array against the S and the Rest of the People he delivered into the hand of Abishai, his Broth he might put them in array against the Children of Ammon: and he said, Syrians be too strong for me, then thou shalt help me! but if the Chil Ammon be too strong for thee, then I will come and help thee! Be of good and let us play the Men for our People, and for the Cities of our GOD! L LORD Do That, Which Seemeth Him Good!' And Joab drew nigh, People that were with him, unto the battle against the Syrians; and they fle*

*And when the Children of Ammon saw that the Syrians were fled, then fled also before Abishai, and entered into the City. So Joab returned from the Children of Ammon, and came to Jerusalem. And when the Syrians saw that they were smitten before Israel, they gathered themselves together; and Hadarezer sent to bring out the Syrians that were beyond the River; and they came to Helam: Shobach, the Captain of the Host of Hadarezer, went before them. And when he told David, he gathered all Israel together, and passed over Jordan, and came to Helam. And the Syrians set themselves in array against David, and fought with him. And the Syrians fled before Israel; and David slew the Men of seven hundred chariots of the Syrians and forty thousand Horsemen, and smote Shobach, Captain of their Host, who died there. And when all the Kings, that were vassals to Hadarezer, saw that they were smitten before Israel, they made peace with Israel and served them. So the Syrians feared to help the Children of Ammon any more."*—2 Sam. x.

Gratitude to GOD, as The FOUNTAIN of all Good, is not inconsistent or incompatible with gratitude to Man, when a willing Instrument, in GOD'S service, for the furtherance of good. David had been assisted in the season of adversity; and in the time of prosperity he was not unmindful thereof. Nahash, the King of the Ammonites, though the mortal Foe of Saul, had yet been friendly to David (as it seems from his own acknowledgment, no particulars thereof being recorded); and though death had placed out of the consciousness of David's mind the memory of his enmity, when he had the power, an active spirit of thankfulness, yet, in the blindness of his heart, was he unwilling to refrain from attentions to the Son of David; how often are the best aims and efforts of our Nature thwarted and perverted by the suggestions of the Spirit of evil, and the weakness and viciousness of Man's heart in yielding to them. Whatever grounds there may have been for suspicion as to the real intention of David from this Embassy, owing to jealousy prevailing between the Children of Israel and those of Ammon, yet the enormities so gross as were offered to the Representatives of a King, could not but greatly aggravate the offence of suspicion; but the error into which a misapprehended heart led Hanun was fatal to him; and he is an instance of the blind-impetuosity of worldly views. Had he sought the friendship of David with the same zeal he exerted to bring him and his Nation into contempt, all the power of Syria could not, with the alliance and assistance that David would have afforded him, have approached to hurt him. If destruction befel Them, that rebelled against the Friend of GOD, what less than Everlasting Confusion and Wrath can await Those, who pertinaciously war against the Omnipotence of GOD! Let the fate of Hanun be a warning not to yield to the admonitions of evil Counsellors, and the still more pernicious dispositions of our own uncontrolled and unspiritualized imaginations! And, with David, let The LORD be our Strength and our Shield; and when He is Willing to Shew us a Goodness, Which indeed is in every instant of our Lives, if we duly consider the Great Works of Creation and Preservation, and the Wonderful Means of Redemption and Sanctification, let us not reject Such Goodness, but accept It as a Father's love to such helpless and dependant Creatures, that It may be Continued to us here and Extended to us in that World, which is without end; and where to be disappointed, is not to be only deprived of the perfection of Spiritual Happiness, but to be the Victim of interminable remorse, despair, and unutterable woe!

David's continuance of Joab as the Captain of his Host, or Generalissimo of his Forces, notwithstanding the offence he had committed in the murder of Abner; or Joab's continuance of such command after the public humiliation, to which, on that account, he had been exposed, may seem extraordinary. But as there is every fair ground to conclude David ignorant of the malicious design of

Joab ere it was perpetrated, it is but fair also to conclude that David con- sidered the general weal of his People, by retaining in the command of the Army a General of pre-eminent talent; and as he had in a degree publicly atoned for his crime, David would not cherish individual resentment, or be extreme in the measure of chastisement he dealt out. Indeed Joab's resignation to the DIVINE Will, his patriotism, his loyalty, his Brotherly affection, shew that he had been a Man of predominating worth, independantly of his professions and David, though hitherto himself the example of upright conduct, was Pharisaiically proud of his own righteousness as to withhold all allowance for occasional failings and infirmities of Others.

The narrative from the Chronicles is thus:—

“Now it came to pass after this, that Nahash, the King of the Chila Ammon died, and his Son reigned in his stead. And David said, ‘I will kindness unto Hanun, the Son of Nahash, because his Father shewed kindness unto me.’ And David sent Messengers to comfort him concerning his Father. Servants of David came into the Land of the Children of Ammon to Ha comfort him. But the Princes of the Children of Ammon said to David, ‘Thinkest thou that David doth honour thy Father, that he hath sent Comforters unto thee? Are not his Servants come unto thee for to search, and to overthrow thee to spy out the Land?’ Wherefore Hanun took David’s Servants and shaved them and cut off their garments in the midst hard by their buttocks, and sent them away. Then there went Certain, and told David how the Men were served. And David to meet them; for the Men were greatly ashamed. And the King said, ‘Thou shalt not return to Jericho until your beards be grown, and then return.’ And when the Children of Ammon saw that they had made themselves odious to David, Hanun and the Children of Ammon sent a thousand talents of Silver to hire them chariots and Horsemen out of Mesopotamia, and out of Syria-maachah, and out of Zobah. They hired thirty and two thousand chariots, and the King of Maachah and the King of Zobah, who came and pitched before Medeba. And the Children of Ammon gathered themselves together from their Cities, and came to battle. And David heard of it, he sent Joab, and all the Host of the mighty Men. And the Children of Ammon came out, and put the battle in array before the gate of the City; and the Kings, that were come, were by themselves in the field. Now Joab saw that the battle was set against him before and behind, he chose out of the Choice of Israel, and put them in array against the Syrians: and the Rest of the People he delivered unto the hand of Abishai, his Brother; and they set themselves in array against the Children of Ammon: and he said, ‘If the Syrians be too strong for me, then thou shalt help me: but if the Children of Ammon be too strong for thee, then I will help thee! Be of good courage, and let us behave ourselves valiantly for our People, and for the Cities of our GOD; and let The LORD do what is Good in His Sight!’ So Joab and the People, that were with him, pitched before the Syrians unto the battle: and they fled before him. And when the Children of Ammon saw that the Syrians were fled, they likewise fled before Abishai, his Brother, and entered into the City. Then Joab came to Jerusalem. And when the Syrians saw that they were put to the worse before Israel, they sent Messengers and drew forth the Syrians, that were beyond the River: and Shophach the Captain of the Host of Hadarezer, went before them. And it was told David, and he gathered all Israel, and passed over Jordan, and came upon them, and pitched the battle in array against them. So when David had put the battle in array against the Syrians, they fought with him. But the Syrians fled before Israel. And David slew of the Syrians seven thousand Men, which fought in chariots, and a thousand Footmen, and killed Shophach, the Captain of the Host. And when the Servants of Hadarezer saw that they were put to the worse before Israel, they

*with David, and became his Servants: neither would the Syrians help the men of Ammon any more.*"—1 Chron. xix.

all its important bearings the Narrative is the same; the agreement as to the success of the Israelites, as to the holy confidence and resignation of their leaders, both David and Joab, and as to the complete discomfiture of the Syrians and their Allies, is obvious; the only variance in the histories is that in the one account states the chief loss of the Syrians to have been in the Cavalry; and in the other of Infantry. This, however, may have arisen from an oversight in one of the pious Historians to such minutiae in military annals, his chief object being directed to the recording a further Deliverance of the People of GOD from the hand of their Enemies, because some of those who put their trust in horses and some in chariots; while the People of GOD trusted in The Living GOD.

*And it came to pass after the year was expired, at the time when Kings go forth to battle, that David sent Joab, and his Servants with him, and all Israel; and they trove the Children of Ammon, and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried in Jerusalem. And it came to pass in an evening tide, that David arose from the bed, and walked upon the roof of the King's house; and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the Woman was very beautiful to look upon: and David sent and inquired after the Woman. And One said, 'Is not this Bath-sheba, the daughter of Eliam, the Wife of Uriah, the Hittite?' And David sent Messengers and took her; and she came in unto him, and he lay with her: for she was unclean from her uncleanness; and she returned unto her house."*—2 Sam. xi, 1 to 4.

faithful to his Narrative, the sacred Historian draws not a veil over the striking features of his otherwise amiable and exemplary Hero. All is here plain, and the Well-Beloved of GOD is for a season sunk, by the violence of temptation, to the depth of the lowest Incubus of Hell. Much as the natural mind may urge in extenuation of the offence—its unpremeditatedness—the fact, forced as it were, upon him, and set forth with such insinuating plainness—the ready yielding of the fair One to his corrupt wishes, and, as it may seem, the forwardness of the mind (when not submissively yielded to the Guidance of GOD) to feed the worst passions of the heart, to pervert even Scripture to its destruction, as is instanced by the remarkable compliance of the Woman with the ceremonial Law of outward purification of the flesh, as if that could justify its subsequent impurity, or be a mitigation of the corruption of the heart by yielding to the sin of adultery. The Spiritual Man, though indisposed to visit with the severity of judgment the failings of Others in this respect, finds no excuse for such failings in himself; and is that with every temptation, wherewith his Soul is tempted to exceed the bounds of temperance, soberness, and chastity, as well as other Laws of his mind in the Spirit as well as in the Letter, there is Made a Way, by the ever ready Grace of That GOD, for his Soul to escape withal. In the instant, therefore, any cause presenting itself for giving rise to any illicit passion, whether of the flesh or of Spirit, he, distrusting his own powers, flies to GOD for Refuge, and calls on Him to Take away the power of evil from within him, and to Save him from the evil by giving him that Power from Above, Which will effectually Enable him to resist the pressing temptation, and to bid the storm of passion, arising from the flesh, to cease and be still. However tempting may be the bait that the devil of all evil sets before the pious Man, he considers that it has within it a poisoned barb that brings with it destruction to the Soul's possession of true peace, and to its hope of sharing that exalted Spiritual Union and Possession of Delight, Which in the Everlasting Mansions of Heaven shall be the Portion of Those who, for GOD'S Sake, have here denied themselves indulgencies,

which His Law or His SPIRIT, Acting on their reason and conscience, For they resist the evil which, yielding a momentary gratification, a hasty joy, would leave for ever on the Soul the sting of remorse and the pain of loathing. The same Scriptures, however, Which thus hold out to us one as be avoided in the example of a Man of general piety, exhibit to us also, a example for imitation, and as a proof of the full sufficiency of Spiritual Sup when appealed to under every temptation, and amidst the two-fold influ of importunity and opportunity, the conduct of Another, in the char of Joseph, whose heart was not overcome of evil, though beset with not temptation.

△ *"And it came to pass, that after the year was expired, at the time that he go out to battle, Joab led forth the power of the army, and wasted the Count the Children of Ammon, and came and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried Jerusalem. And Joab smote Rabbah and destroyed it."—1 Chron. xx, 1.*

The continuation of this history of the war against the Ammonites is g opposite to the corresponding account of it in the xii of the 2nd of Samuel; bu parenthetical and distressing account of the heinous offences of David in adulterous seduction of Bathsheba, and the consequent murder of her Husband not given in the Chronicles.

*"And the Woman conceived, and sent and told David, and said, 'I am Child.' And David sent to Joab, saying, 'Send me Uriah, the Hittite!' Joab sent Uriah to David. And when Uriah was come unto him, David dema of him, 'how Joab did, and how the People did, and how the war prospered?' David said to Uriah, 'Go down to thy house, and wash thy feet!' And he departed out of the King's house, and there followed him a mess of meat from King. But Uriah slept at the door of the King's house with all the Servants of Lord, and went not down to his house. And when they had told David, sa, 'Uriah went not down unto his house,' David said unto Uriah, 'Camest thou from thy journey? why then didst thou not go down unto thine house?' Uriah said unto David, 'The Ark, and Israel, and Judah, abide in tents, an Lord Joab, and the Servants of my Lord are encamped in the open fields; sh then go into mine house, to eat, and to drink, and to lie with my Wife? as livest and as thy Soul liveth, I will not do this thing.' And David said to U, 'Tarry here to-day also, and to-morrow I will let thee depart.' So Uriah abo Jerusalem that day and the morrow. And when David had called him, he di and drink before him, and he made him drunk: and at even he went out to his bed with the Servants of his Lord, but went not down to his house. A came to pass in the morning, that David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it b hand of Uriah: and he wrote in the letter, saying, 'Set ye Uriah in the forefro the hottest battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten and die.' A came to pass, when Joab observed the City, that he assigned Uriah unto a place u he knew that valiant Men were: and the Men of the City went out and fought Joab: and there fell Some of the People of the Servants of David, and Uriah Hittite, died also."—2 Sam. xi, 5 to 17.*

What an awful career of deliberate and desperate sinfulness is here wit reserve portrayed! The effect of this unhallowed union becoming obvi One of the Parties, an apprehension arises in the mind of the Other that as Husband had been, perhaps, long absent, his suspicions would, on his return awakened to the evil done him. David, therefore, adopts the expedient o deavouring to bring the Husband and Wife immediately together, that he, at l might be lulled into unsuspectingness of his Wife's unfaithfulness. But fin him possessed of so much of the noble spirit of a Soldier, as not to accept of i gencies, that were not alike open to his Commanders and Fellow-War

id attempts to subdue his magnanimity by the generally seductive influence ine. Still stedfast to his principles, even intoxication, though so naturally ing to excite the sensual passions towards a Woman of peculiar loveliness, lawfully accessible to him, and notwithstanding he had the King's permis-, and even his direct encouragement to go down to her as his own Wife, h could not be prevailed to abandon his sense of military integrity. And so noble a character in a Soldier, and, what was infinitely more valuable in as a Man, the veneration in which he held the honour and service of GOD, refusing the comforts of a home, because the Ark, as representing the ence of The LORD, and Israel and Judah, as constituting His People, abode ents, could not save him from being destined to destruction by One, for n he was willing to devote himself honourably to any sacrifice, even of life . But such is the fatal influence of sin, that, when once yielded to, it ies on its Victims from one crime to another by the deluding sense of a false dly shame, and forgetfulness that, though the World may not know or antly overlook it, yet The LORD Seeth in Secret, and that there is Know- : in The MOST HIGH of all the workings of the heart. That a mind, ally conscious of an Overseeing as well as Overruling PROVIDENCE, l thus be the miserable Dupe of a momentary gratification of illicit passion, after the commission of the heinous crime of adultery, could deliberately and order even the murder of the Man so grievously injured, is a crying nce of Human weakness and wickedness, when withdrawn from the con- ing Grace of GOD. Let not this instance of a holy Man's so dreadful rtire from his GOD, lead or justify us to triumph over his failings, though eing indeed is the contemplation of them; but rather let it excite in us an ension, that, however pure we may seem in our own eyes, and however able we may suppose ourselves of such flagrant iniquity, we may, in some and unanticipated hour of temptation, fall into a snare equally alienating us GOD'S Favour; and may finally come short of His Kingdom. Instead, fore, of bringing railing accusation against David, let us, by continual r, seek for the Preventing and Prevailing Grace of GOD in all our thoughts, words, and works; and when we think we stand, take heed, lest we fall.

*"Then Joab sent and told David all the things concerning the war; and red the Messenger, saying, 'When thou hast made an end of telling the matters e war unto the King, and if so be that the King's wrath arise, and he say unto 'Wherefore approached ye so nigh unto the City when ye did fight? knew ye hat they would shoot from the wall? Who smote Abimelech, the Son of Jerub- sh? did not a Woman cast a piece of a millstone upon him from the wall, that id in Thebez? why went ye nigh the wall?' then say thou, 'Thy Servant Uriah, Tittite, is dead also.' So the Messenger went, and came and shewed David all Joab had sent him for. And the Messenger said unto David, 'Surely the prevailed against us, and came out unto us into the field, and we were upon even unto the entering of the gate: and the Shooters shot from off the wall thy Servants; and Some of the King's Servants be dead, and thy Servant h, the Hittite, is dead also.' Then David said unto the Messenger, 'Thus shalt ay unto Joab, 'Let not this thing displease thee, for the sword devoureth One, ill as Another! make thy battle more strong against the City, and overthrow d encourage thou him.' And when the Wife of Uriah heard that Uriah, her and, was dead, she mourned for her Husband. And when the mourning was David sent and fetched her to his house, and she became his Wife, and bare e Son."—2 Sam. xi, 18 to first part of 27.*

The iniquity of David was indeed great; and Joab, the Man who had been out to public shame by his King for having killed an Alien, is so conscious



that the offence of murder could not be palliated by the example of a King he dares not tell the Messenger between them how the fact of Uriah's death arisen : but disguises the narrative of the event with the most ingenious a under the cloak of probable occurrence. Had the Army under Joab known the lustful appetite of the King had been not only the occasion of the injury and injustice that could be offered to the feelings of an honourable Warrior, but in the progress of evil had been the principle one in superinducing the death of a tried, and faithful, and magnanimous Servant, what disgust have been excited in it. And had Joab been actuated by the ambition of a General, what an opportunity would David have afforded him to gratify exposing his murderous letter to the Army, and holding its Writer up to censure for the foul offence committed against the Wife of Uriah, thus attempt be grossly aggravated by the deliberate slaughter of her valiant Husband ! did the measure of David's guilt stop here, for he afterwards riots in his her whose virtue he had subdued ; so seductive and unsatisfying is the nature of sin, and thus restless in its progress towards the Soul's destruction. What an awful example does this continuance in sin by such a Man as exhibit to the reflecting and serious mind ; and how powerfully is it calculated to impress us with a conviction of the necessity of a continual watchfulness to rein over our passions, and of our unceasingly asking, in Spirit at least, the Grace, Which is alone Sufficient to Save us from such bitter Enemies as Sin and Second Death, may every where, and in all things Abound within us ! The Lightning of DIVINE Destruction did not Overtake David is attributable to the Wonderful Mercy of GOD, and to the pious tendency of his general Life, which these offences against GOD and Man were indeed crying exceptions.

“ *But the thing, that David had done, Displeased The LORD. And The LORD Sent Nathan unto David : and he came unto him, and said unto him, ‘ There were two Men in one City ; the One rich, and the Other poor : the rich had exceeding many flocks and herds ; but the poor Man had nothing, save one ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up ; and it grew up together with him and with his Children ; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a Daughter : and there came a Traveller unto the rich Man, and he spared to take of his own flock, and of his own dress for the way-faring Man, that was come unto him ; but took the poor lamb, and dressed it for the Man, that was come to him.’ And David’s anger was greatly kindled against the Man ; and he said to Nathan, ‘ As The LORD liveth, the Man, that hath done this thing, shall surely die ; and he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.’ And Nathan said unto David, ‘ Thou art the Man !’ Thus Saith The LORD GOD of Israel, ‘ I have Anointed thee King over Israel, and I have Delivered thee out of the hand of Saul ; I gave thee thy Master’s house and thy Master’s Wives into thy bosom, as thou hast built thee the House of Israel, and of Judah : and, if That had been too little, I have moreover have Given unto thee Such and Such Things. Wherefore hast thou despised the Commandment of The LORD, to do evil in His Sight ? Thou hast taken Uriah, the Hittite, with the sword, and hast taken his Wife to be thy Wife ; and hast slain him with the sword of the Children of Ammon. Now, therefore shall never depart from thine House ; because thou hast despised the Commandment of The LORD, and hast taken the Wife of Uriah, the Hittite, to be thy Wife.’ Thus Saith The LORD, ‘ Behold, I will Raise up evil against thee out of thine own House, and I will take thy Wives before thine eyes, and Give them unto thy Neighbour, and he will take thy Wives in the sight of this sun : for thou didst it secretly ; but I will do this Thing before all Israel and before the sun.’ And David said unto Nathan, ‘ I have sinned against The LORD !’ ”—2 Sam. xi, last part of 27 ; xii, 1 to first par*

THE LORD is a SPIRIT of Perfect Purity, and nothing that is impure can survive an outrage of His Law, and an alienation from His Favour. *"Thou shalt do no murder," "Thou shalt not commit adultery,"* had been two of the most prominent and impressive Lessons that David had imbibed with the dawn of reason; and the Sacred Oracle, from Whence Those Doctrines had issued, had generally been held in becoming veneration by him. But the Devil, which is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, (and indeed, who needs the Continual and never Ceasing Help of its CREATOR, and how, otherwise, through its own perverseness, become the prey of the Destroyer. It is the Transcendent Mercy of GOD, through the Intercessory Sacrifice of the Incarnate SON, that so long as all sense of sorrow for sin is not extinct, and we do not give ourselves over to a reprobate mind, He Pitieth us as a Father pitieth his Children, and is Willing to Save That, which would be otherwise totally lost; for *"He hath no Pleasure in the death of a Sinner, but had that he would turn from his wickedness and live."* Great as had been the passions of David against his Neighbour, yet the fear of The LORD was implanted in him, and, therefore, in the Abundance and Tenderness of His Mercy, GOD Interposed to Improve that fear to the re-establishment of a spirit within him, and Sent His Minister to awaken David to a sense of his sin. And in proof that the fear of The LORD, which is the beginning of wisdom, had not been quenched within the bosom of David, he receives that Minister with reverence, and listens to him not only with patience but with zeal. A heart of stone could scarcely have withheld emotion at the relation of a story so forcibly descriptive of inhumanity and injustice; and David, who held the sceptre of Regal power, and held the scales of Human justice in his hand, in the instant pronounced judgment without mercy on him, who had thus shown no mercy; though unmindful of the immeasurably greater offence which, in circumstances of comparison, had been committed by himself; and little thinking that the application was meant to him. Indeed, this example of David may be most salutary to ourselves in the estimate we form of his and our own characters, and in interpreting and appropriating Scripture History, as Scripture Precept to the similar occurrences in our own Lives and Actions. The Judgment that we pass on the character and conduct of others, whether living or dead, should be after a faithful review of our own faults, and with a conviction of the preponderating mixture we need of Mercy and Judgment, Which assuredly Awaits us, and Which will Fix our Everlasting destiny. And as we need Forgiveness of our trespasses, let us be more ready to forgive than to condemn the trespasses of our Fellow-Creatures! At even the failings of good Men, operating as a caution and an inducement to self-inspection, may turn to our advantage. Out of his own mouth was David condemned: and the Justice of the Universal Judgment to Come no One able to gainsay. Well, indeed, may it be for us if the Judgment of Conscience on our past sins be, through our present repentance, Visited in mercy upon us in the Life that is, and the absence of temporal good be the punishment Reserved for us; and well also may it be, if, when the contrite heart be awakened within us at the recollection of our transgressions from the path of Righteousness and true Holiness, we bring forth fruits meet for repentance, and such as may support us, through faith in CHRIST JESUS, to the everlasting Salvation; that we may prove our repentance, by restoring fourfold the thing we have taken—by healing the heart we have all but broken—by warning Those, whom our evil affections or example have bound with the chain of sin—and by a heart renewed in the spirit of purity and piety, of Brotherly

love and charity towards GOD and Man, turn unto GOD, that He may, CHRIST'S Sake, Abundantly Pardon us.

△ “*And David said unto Nathan, ‘I have sinned against The LORD!’*”  
2 Sam. xii, first part of 13.

The heart of the truly Penitent prompts, instantaneously, the tongue acknowledge a fault in all its circumstances of aggravation, and to submit with humility to the Judgment and Sentence Passed by DIVINE WISDOM upon It may be remarked that David offers nothing in palliation of his offence; attempts not even the semblance of justification. He knows that GOD Know the heart and all the secrets and workings thereof, and that there is way of escape for us, if we neglect The so Great Salvation, of which confession and contrition are the entrances to that Path, which leads unto Pardon and Reconciliation; and such repentance bringeth unspeakable consolation supported by a full acknowledgment of, and firm faith in, The All-Sufficient Atonement and Intercessory Merits of The SON of GOD as The SAVIOUR of Sinners. The death of Uriah was, perhaps, but his passport to that State Where the Wicked cease from troubling, and Where the Weary are at rest. Where, though *there is no marrying nor giving in marriage*, there is a communion and fellowship in holy love with all the Angels of Heaven, and all the Spirits of just Men Made perfect, and, what infinitely transcends the ecstasy of delight, even with The FOUNTAIN of Love and Life Itself for ever and ever. It was, therefore, against The LORD, Who had Commanded David to spare and protect the life of Uriah, rather than against Uriah, that this secret an evil had been done. It is true, that as against Bathsheba, David's iniquity wore a deeper dye: he had seduced her from the paths of virtue, and had influenced her to sacrifice her honour at the shrine of his passion; thus subjecting her, through life, to the bitter pangs of remorse, at having neglected the service of her HEAVENLY KING, to feed the loathsome appetite of an earthly One. It is true that he had endeavoured to alleviate the injury he had done, by honouring her before Men, in taking her to be his Wife; and, perhaps she was ignorant that she took for her second Husband the Murderer of her first. The example of the sincere and deep penitence of David may also have operated to the production, in the mind of Bathsheba, of a deeper sense of the importance of observing GOD'S Law, than in her former life, even before her fall, she possessed; for thus is it, that in the Gracious Appointments of PROVIDENCE good is elicited from evil. The Record of the effect of this lively penitence is found in many passages of the Psalms, and more especially in those numbered 32 and 51, wherein the Psalmist says, “*I acknowledged my sin unto Thee LORD, and mine iniquity have I not hid! I said, I will confess my transgressions unto The LORD!*” and especially in the latter Psalm, where he says, “*Have Mercy upon me, O GOD, according to Thy Loving Kindness: according unto the Multitude of Thy Tender Mercies Blot out my Transgressions! Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and Cleanse me from my sin! for I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Create in me a clean heart O GOD, and Renew a right Spirit within me! Cast me not away from Thy Presence and Take not Thy HOLY SPIRIT from me! Deliver me from blood-guiltiness O GOD, Thou GOD of my Salvation!”* And in the 38th Psalm he says “*Mine iniquities are gone over mine head; as an heavy burden, they are too heavy for me!*” Passages indicating the most heartfelt sorrow, exemplifying the profound consciousness of unworthiness, and pointing, in the spirit of true piety, to The Great PHYSICIAN of Souls, by Whom Alone the Healing Balm of Pardon and of Peace could be Supplied.

*"And Nathan said unto David, 'The LORD also hath Put away thy sin; thou shalt not die! Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to thine Enemies of The LORD to blaspheme, the Child also, that is born unto thee, shall surely die.' And Nathan departed unto his house. And The LORD Struck the Child, that Uriah's Wife bare unto David, and it was very sick. David, therefore, besought GOD for the Child: and David fasted, and went in, and lay all night upon the earth: and the Elders of his house arose, and went to him, to raise him up from the earth: but he would not, neither did he eat bread with them. And came to pass on the seventh day, that the Child died. And the Servants of David went to tell him that the Child was dead: for they said, 'Behold, while the Child is yet alive, we spake unto him, and he would not hearken unto our voice; how will he then vex himself, if we tell him that the Child is dead?' But when David heard that his Servants whispered, David perceived that the Child was dead: therefore he said unto his Servants, 'Is the Child dead?' And they said, 'He is dead.' Then David arose from the earth, and washed and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the House of The LORD, and worshipped: then he came to his own house; and when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat. Then David said unto his Servants, 'What thing is this, that thou hast done? thou didst fast and weep for the Child, while it was alive; but when the Child was dead, thou didst rise and eat bread?' And he said, 'While the Child was yet alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, 'Who can tell whether GOD will be Gracious to me, and the Child may live?' But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.'"*—*Sam. xii.*, last part of 13 to 23.

If we, who are all more or less Transgressors from the perfect Law of GOD, acknowledge our sins, and turn unto The LORD in sorrow of heart and in humble supplication for Pardon and for Peace, He is Willing to Forgive us our sins and to Cleanse us from all unrighteousness. He will have Mercy upon us, and will abundantly Pardon, Remembering our iniquities no more, but Restoring us to the Inestimable Riches of His Grace and Favour. Nor is He Slow to Hear: but instantaneous as is our repentance, when it is such as may not be suspected of (of which He, Who Knoweth the heart of Man, doth Justly Judge), is the Emanation from His Mercy. David had grievously offended, but in repenting of the evil he had committed, with that contrition of Soul, which operated through the continuance of his Life in self-condemnation and amendment, he no sooner owns his fault as a crying sin against The LORD, and thus throws himself upon The DIVINE Mercy, doubtless through faith in CHRIST, but he Receives the Annunciation of DIVINE Forgiveness, ere he had time to ask it. But David's escape must not be presumptuously held up as an encouragement to a reliance on the mere lip-service of confession, without the heart is, at the same time, wrapt in the deep sense of contrition, and shame, and sorrow, and self-abomination, and hatred of the sin, and a fervent desire to do iniquity no more, but to be advanced to the influence of Preventing and Prevailing Grace in the Ways of GOD'S Law and in the Works of His Commandments, the Spring from Whence that fountain of confession flows. Let us not deceive Ourselves so dreadfully as to suppose, because our Fellow-Mortal may be duped by our hypocrisy, that The Omniscient DEITY can be Mocked with impunity; let us not imagine that to say "LORD Have Mercy upon us and Lay not this sin to our charge!" is the all of repentance, on which Forgiveness is to be Visited. Awful indeed is the state of the corruption of that heart, which can so wilfully deceive itself; it is the continuance in a disposition for sin, more than the actual commission of it, that alienates the Affection and debars the Care of GOD for us. It is the conversion of the heart, that constitutes vital repentance,

and this may be attained though Death may cut short the means of an out manifestation of it by practical reformation. If with an equally contrite as David's, we, having sinned, acknowledge that we have sinned against LORD, the Sure Word of Scriptural Prophecy in Spirit Saith unto us, 'LORD also hath Put away your sins; ye shall not die.' Saul acknowledge had sinned, but the acknowledgment was made in the hope of avoiding temporal judgment of degradation before his Subjects, and was tinctured, therefore, with spiritual pride or worldly ambition: not so David; his expressed shame was the offspring of a feeling of sorrow for having offended his DIV MASTER; this is obvious from a general view of David's character, and is beautifully adverted to in the historical summary given of him by the Son of Sirach.—After mentioning Nathan as the Prophet in the time of D he said, "*As is the fat taken away from the peace-offering, so was David Cut out of the Children of Israel: he played with lions as with kids, and with bears with lambs. Slew he not a Giant, when he was yet but young? And did he not away reproach from the People, when he lifted up his hand with the stone in the hand, and beat down the boasting of Goliath? For he called upon The MOST HIGH LORD; and He Gave him strength in his right hand to slay that mighty War, and set up the Horn of His People. So the People honoured him with Ten Thousand and praised him in the Blessings of The LORD, in that He Gave him a Crown of Glory. For he destroyed the Enemies on every side, and brought to nought Philistines, his Adversaries; and brake their Horn in sunder. In all his works praised The HOLY ONE MOST HIGH with words of glory; with his heart he sung songs, and loved Him That Made him. He set Singers also before the Altar, that by their voices they might make sweet melody, and daily sing praise their songs: he beautified their feasts, and set in order the solemn times unto the end, that they might praise His Holy Name, and that the Temple might sound morning: The LORD Took away his sins; and Exalted his Horn for ever. He Gave him a Covenant of Kings, and a Throne of Glory in Israel* Ecclus. xlvii. 1 to 11.

△ To The LORD, our GOD, Belong Mercies and Forgiveness; and, with Prophet Micah, we, who have been abundantly Pardoned by Him in the transgressions of our past Lives, and are still Offered by Him Plenteous Redemption, may say, "*Who is A GOD Like unto Thee, O LORD, our GOD That Pardoneth iniquity? HE Retaineth not His Anger for ever; because He Delighteth in Mercy. He will Turn again, He will have Compassion upon Him who will Subdue our iniquities.*"—vii, 18, 19. In the Proclamation of HOVAH from Mount Sinai unto Moses, This, His Attribute of Mercy, is magnificently insisted on, and held out to our equal consolation and encouragement: "*The LORD, The LORD GOD, Merciful and Gracious, Long-Suffering and Abundant in Goodness and Truth, Keeping Mercy for Thousands, Forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin.*"—Ex. xxxiv, 6, 7. And it is not in words express a conviction of this Truth with more force than in those attributes or, at least, considered as assimilated to the sentiments of the offending David himself: "*Bless The LORD, O my Soul; and all, that is within me, bless His Holy Name! Bless The LORD, O my Soul, and forget not all His Benevolence Who Forgiveth all thine iniquities: Who Healeth all thy diseases: Who deemeth thy Life from destruction: Who Crowneth thee with Loving-Kindness and Tender Mercies. THE LORD is Merciful and Gracious, Slow to Anger, Plenteous in Mercy: He will not always Chide, neither will He Keep His Anger for ever: He hath not Dealt with us after our sins; nor Rewarded us according to our iniquities: for as the Heaven is high above the Earth, so Great is His Mercy toward Them that fear Him! as far as the East is from the West, so far hath*

*ed our transgressions from us ! Like as a Father pitieth his Children, so LORD Pitieth Them that fear Him : for He Knoweth our frame ; He bereth that we are dust.*"—Ps. ciii, 1 to 4, and 8 to 14. In the same strain of pious acknowledgment of The DIVINE Goodness and Mercy led towards true contrition of heart, does the Prophet Isaiah thus speak :

*Saith The HIGH and LOFTY ONE, That Inhabiteth Eternity, Whose is HOLY, 'I Dwell in the High and Holy Place, with him also, that is of a and humble Spirit, to Revive the Spirit of the Humble, and to Revive the f the contrite Ones ; for I will not Contend for ever ; neither will I be always '—lvii, 15, 16.—Because, therefore, of the honesty of David's repentment of the firm hold it had on his heart, which, though evidenced to Many degrees, was Known and fully Foreknown unto GOD, did GOD safe to Turn away the Severity of His Anger from him. And so will He s, if we sorrow with a godly sorrow, like David, for the sins that have ver our heads, and which our hearts have conceived ; for justly, indeed, e adopt the saying, and apply it to ourselves, "If Thou, LORD, shouldst niquities, O LORD, who shall stand ? But there is Forgiveness with Thee ; ou mayst be Feared. With The LORD there is Mercy, and with Him is us Redemption."—Ps. cxxx, 3, 4, and 7.*

it in the short-sighted judgment of Man, and whose Human Reason s the prerogative of judging all things, even the Deep Things of GOD, the n of The Truly Wise GOD is daringly called in question, and the ls of The MOST HIGH are set at nought, if not made a mockery or

THE ALMIGHTY, in Whose Hands are the Issues of Life and Death, to Take of the Life of David, with whom was the sin that awakened The E Anger, but Took that of the little One, who had known no sin, neither ile found in his mouth. But the One He Took in Mercy from the evil to and Placed his Soul, almost in the instant of its terrestrial birth, in the s of Celestial Paradise : the Other He left to work out his Salvation with d trembling ; to atone, by the actions of a contrite and converted heart, for brought the Name of his CREATOR into disrepute, and given occasion ; Service to be lightly esteemed. David's confidence in the Immortality Soul can hardly be doubted. On the death of the Child this was apy acknowledged, "*I shall go to him ; but he shall not return to me :*" and, , where is the Spirit that could have sustained his infirmities amidst war rsecution and famine and domestic affliction, if in this Life only he had f continuance ? But in the ingenuousness of his heart he felt that the sion of DIVINE Anger had Gone forth by reason of his own iniquity ; true humility of Soul he sought, by the only means that are effectual to reconciliation of the Offended MAJESTY of HEAVEN, by fasting and ation and prayer, to turn away That High-Engendered Displeasure. And : lively instance of penitence from an Earthly Monarch, in the face of all vants, could hardly have been devised, nor a more palpable demonstration ntal affection for a Child, which, as the fruit of an illicit intercourse, but en meets in a Father's treatment only neglect and cruelty.

nd as the Secret of The LORD is with Them that fear Him, so is Consola- der affliction the Fruit of His Favour. The natural Man mourns without xture of alleviation, and but too often sinks from despair to Self-destruc- Not such is the sorrow of the godly Man ; without hardening his heart : all the amiable sensibilities of his Nature, he bounds the exercise of them leration, and sorroweth not as One without hope ; but when the Decree of .MIGHTY is Gone forth, bows to It with the resignation that is the ornament eek and quiet Spirit. And when the Soul has the hope, which is full of

Immortality, what indeed is there in the afflictions of this Life that should extinguish so blissful a prospect of Peace and of never-ending Joy? "*I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.*" David could not mean merely that the dust of the Sire was to mingle indiscriminately with the dust of the Son in the grave, and that there, like the unspiritualized brutes, they should together remain an inanimate and senseless mass. No! Brighter views opened to his faithful and prophetic eye. He looked beyond the grave, and felt the conviction of that Consoling Truth, that JEHOVAH, Who is The GOD of Abraham and The GOD of Isaac and The GOD of Jacob, is not The GOD of the Dead, but of the Living; and, therefore, when the beloved fruit of his loins fell blighted from its earthly Parent-stem, he yet knew, that there was that Seed within it, which would generate in an incomparably more glorious form, and live for ever and ever. Under all such trials, therefore, let us, in the spirit of a lively Faith, say to our heart, "*What is thy hope?*" and it will answer, to our unspeakable consolation, "*Truly my hope is even in Thee, O LORD!*" for we shall know, and hail the gladdening Truth, that He will Redeem us from the power of the grave; if, like the infant Son of Bath-sheba, we know no sin, or, like David, having sinned, we sorrow with a godly sorrow, and manifest a repentance not to be repented of.

△ "*And David comforted Bath-sheba, his Wife, and she bare a Son; and he called his name 'Solomon;' and The LORD Loved him. And He Sent by the hand of Nathan, the Prophet; and he called his name Jedidiah, because of The LORD.*" —2 Sam. xii, 24, 25.

The conduct of David towards Bath-sheba and the Child she first bore to him, with the exception of the offence in the commission of which he involved her, manifested the tenderest affection, that even a Husband or Father could shew, and was calculated to awaken in her religious reflections, and to draw her nearer to her GOD. The most unequivocal repentance had been exhibited before her on the part of David; and the interest he took in the Child of their illicit intercourse was the surest presage of an extended regard for their less unrighteous Offspring. The regenerated purity of the mind, both of Bath-sheba and David, is only reasonably inferred from The DIVINE Blessing on their after Issue, Marked in so pre-eminent a manner by the Assurance of The DIVINE Love towards it, and by the especial Revelation of The DIVINE Will in the Appointment of its name, Jedidiah, signifying "Beloved of The LORD."

"*And Joab fought against Rabbah of the Children of Ammon, and took the royal City. And Joab sent Messengers to David, and said, 'I have fought against Rabbah, and have taken the City of Waters: now therefore gather the Rest of the People together; and encamp against the City and take it! lest I take the City, and it be called after my name. And David gathered all the People together, and went to Rabbah, and fought against it, and took it: and he took their King's crown from off his head (the weight whereof was a talent of gold, with the precious stones); and it was set on David's head: and he brought forth the spoil of the City in great abundance. And he brought forth the People, that were therein, and put them under saws, and under harrows of iron, and under axes of iron, and made them pass through the brick-kiln: and thus did he unto all the Cities of the Children of Ammon. So David and all the People returned unto Jerusalem.'*" —2 Sam. xii, 26 to 31.

The statement in the Book of Chronicles is as follows:—

"*And it came to pass, that after the year was expired, at the time that Kings go out to battle, Joab led forth the Power of the Army, and wasted the Country of the Children of Ammon, and came, and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried at Jerusalem. And Joab smote Rabbah, and destroyed it. And David took the crown of their King from off his head, and found it to weigh a talent of gold; and there were precious stones in it: and it was set upon David's head: and he brought also*

*exceeding much spoil out of the City. And he brought out the People that were in it, and cut them with saws, and with harrows of iron, and with axes. Even so dealt David with all the Cities of the Children of Ammon. And David and all the People returned to Jerusalem."*—1 Chron. xx, 1 to 3.

The reverence continued to be entertained by Joab for David, notwithstanding his witnessing the fallen Majesty of David's heart, is one proof of the general excellence of David's character; though the seeming severity, exercised by him towards the Children of Ammon, renders questionable his possessing that essential property of true greatness, the magnanimity of clemency in a Conqueror: but in the destruction and inflictions of punishment thus visited on a Nation, he was, perhaps, the conscious Instrument of The DIVINE Will, from Whence (through a conviction that all other means of checking the evil propensities of a wicked and adulterous Generation would fail) had Emanated by an especial Revelation an Order so to deal with the Objects of DIVINE Wrath. And, indeed, one construction, which the terms "putting under saws," &c., may perhaps bear, is, that he made them undertake hard work in drawing iron harrows as in the brick-field; and, in that view, a more salutary direction to minds, teeming with viciousness and hardened in sin, cannot be given than by that which labour and useful occupation afford.

"*And it came to pass after this, that Absalom, the Son of David, had a fair Sister, whose name was Tamar, and Amnon, the Son of David, loved her: and Amnon was so vexed, that he fell sick for his Sister Tamar; for she was a Virgin: and Amnon thought it hard for him to do any thing to her: but Amnon had a Friend, whose name was Jonadab, the Son of Shimeah, David's Brother; and Jonadab was a very subtil Man: and he said unto him, 'Why art thou, being the King's Son, lean from day to day? wilt thou not tell me?' And Amnon said unto him, 'I love Tamar, my Brother Absalom's Sister.' And Jonadab said unto him, 'Lay thee down on thy bed, and make thyself sick! and when thy Father cometh to see thee, say unto him, 'I pray thee, let my Sister Tamar come, and give me meat, and dress the meat in my sight, that I may see it, and eat it at her hand.' So Amnon lay down and made himself sick: and when the King was come to see him, Amnon said unto the King, 'I pray thee, let Tamar, my Sister, come, and make me a couple of cakes in my sight, that I may eat at her hand.' Then David sent home to Tamar, saying, 'Go now to thy Brother Amnon's house, and dress him meat.' So Tamar went to her Brother Amnon's house (and he was laid down), and she took flour and kneaded it, and made cakes in his sight, and did bake the cakes; and she took a pan, and poured them out before him, but he refused to eat. And Amnon said, 'Have out all Men from me!' and they went out every Man from him; and Amnon said unto Tamar, 'Bring the meat into the chamber, that I may eat of thine hand!' And Tamar took the cakes, which she had made, and brought them into the chamber to Amnon, her Brother: and when she had brought them unto him to eat, he took hold of her, and said unto her, 'Come lie with me, my Sister!' And she answered him, 'Nay, my Brother, do not force me! for no such thing ought to be done in Israel: do not thou this folly! And I, Whither shall I cause my shame to go? and as for thee, thou shalt be as One of the Fools in Israel! Now, therefore, I pray thee, speak unto the King; for he will not withhold me from thee!' Howbeit he would not hearken unto her voice; but being stronger than she, forced her, and lay with her. Then Amnon hated her exceedingly, so that the hatred, wherewith he hated her, was greater than the love, wherewith he had loved her; and Amnon said unto her, 'Arise, be gone!' And she said unto him, 'There is no cause: this evil, in sending me away, is greater than the other, that thou didst unto me.' But he would not hearken unto her. Then he called his Servant, that ministered unto him, and said, 'Put now this Woman out from me, and bolt the*



door after her !' And she had a garment of divers colours upon her ; for with such robes were the King's Daughters, that were Virgins, apparelled. Then his Servant brought her out, and bolted the door after her. And Tamar put ashes on her head, and rent her garment of divers colours, that was on her, and laid her hand on her head, and went on crying. And Absalom, her Brother, said unto her, 'Hath Amnon, thy Brother, been with thee ? but hold now thy peace, my Sister : he is thy Brother ; regard not this thing !' So Tamar remained desolate in her Brother Absalom's house. But when King David heard of all these things, he was very wroth. And Absalom spake unto his Brother Amnon neither good nor bad ; for Absalom hated Amnon, because he had forced his Sister Tamar. And it came to pass after two full years, that Absalom had Sheep-shearers in Baal-hazor, which is beside Ephraim : and Absalom invited all the King's Sons : and Absalom came to the King and said, 'Behold now, thy Servant hath Sheep-shearers, let the King, I beseech thee, and his Servants, go with thy Servant !' And the King said to Absalom, 'Nay, my Son, let us not All now go, lest we be chargeable unto thee !' And he pressed him : howbeit he would not go, but blessed him. Then said Absalom, 'If not, I pray thee let my Brother Amnon go with us !' And the King said unto him, 'Why should he go with thee ?' But Absalom pressed him, that he let Amnon and all the King's Sons go with him. Now Absalom had commanded his Servants, saying, 'Mark ye now, when Amnon's heart is merry with wine, and when I say unto you, 'Smite Amnon !' then kill him, fear not ! have not I commanded you ? be courageous and be valiant !' And the Servants of Absalom did unto Amnon, as Absalom had commanded. Then all the King's Sons arose, and every Man gat him up upon his mule, and fled. And it came to pass, while they were in the way, that tidings came to David, saying, 'Absalom hath slain all the King's Sons, and there is not One of them left.' Then the King arose and tare his garments, and lay on the earth ; and all his Servants stood by, with their clothes rent. And Jonadab, the Son of Shimeah, David's Brother, answered and said, 'Let not my Lord suppose that they have slain all the young Men, the King's Sons : for Amnon only is dead : for by the appointment of Absalom this hath been determined from the day, that he forced his Sister Tamar. Now, therefore, let not my Lord, the King, take the thing to his heart, to think that all the King's Sons are dead ! for Amnon only is dead.' But Absalom fled. And the young Man, that kept the watch, lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold there came much People by the way of the hill-side behind him. And Jonadab said unto the King, 'Behold, the King's Sons come ; as thy Servant said, so it is.' And it came to pass, as soon as he had made an end of speaking, that, behold, the King's Sons came, and lifted up their voice and wept ; and the King also and all his Servants wept very sore. But Absalom fled, and went to Talmai, the Son of Ammihud, King of Geshur. And David mourned for his Son every day. So Absalom fled, and went to Geshur ; and was there three years. And the Soul of King David longed to go forth unto Absalom : for he was comforted concerning Amnon, seeing he was dead."—2 Sam. xiii.

Melancholy as the detail of this succession of catastrophe in the family of David is, yet is the Record of it not without the means of profitable instruction. The first object of consideration is the evil counsel of Jonadab, and the proof of the natural weakness and folly of Man in the example of Amnon in yielding to it. Had Amnon, like his Father David, sought out or cherished such a Friend as Jonathan, they would have taken sweet counsel together, and the heart of the One or the head of the Other would have prompted the seeking an honourable union with the Object of affection, and cementing it by the countenance of the King, and by the Favour of The ALMIGHTY. Earth yields no higher happiness than the communion of Love with Religion : and to let the evil of our own hearts,

counsel of our evil Friends deprive us of it, and convert that, which should be a boon, into a bane, is the height of folly and self-injustice. In all instances of our life should we set a watch over our hearts, that we become Dupes of our own evil passions, or of the unrighteous suggestions of and should keep the door of our own lips, that our utterances of advice be those of the friendship of this World, which is at enmity with GOD.

Secondly: the little continuance of this Life's joys, more especially when mixed with viciousness, is matter for serious reflection. By a base trick and suggested by a Minister of Hell, Amnon, deceiving the unsuspecting David, obtained his diabolical purpose, and though Tamar might, if she had been not unwilling to yield to his lawful embraces, yet would he not satisfy his savage appetite; and, how was he repaid? by loathing, almost in the same degree as his passion being gratified, the Object, who had fired him with that even to the madness of incurring the just Vengeance of HEAVEN, and tempt of all good Men, and probably of bringing down upon himself eternal chastisement: at the same time, perhaps, equally hating himself for having done so, though with too much pride to seek the only means open to him of regaining his peace by expiating, as far as might be, his offence, in tendering it to the Woman he had abused, and in offering her immediate marriage. A deliberate seduction is, and opposed to every hope or claim of Heaven, a merited rejection and abandonment, to leave the Sacrifice of our villainy to the consequences of poverty and despair, is a depth of evil fearful to look into, and in the contemplation of the Judgment Awaiting it. In the estimate of GOD's heart, when closing its eyes to the only true Light, that lighteth unto men the way of Wisdom, is deceitful above all things; and the misery of a false religion, actuated by sinful and sensual propensities, is consummated by a false piety which rejects the only antidote for the evil. Distressing as was the fate of Tamar, she being mortally wounded in the delicate sensibilities of Female virtue, to come to her with anguish at the degradation so cruelly and unmeritedly cast upon her, and exemplary as she was in the observance of the rules of chastity, and ready to exercise the amiable virtues of Sisterly love and charity, yet to be obliged to equal the Ways of PROVIDENCE and to comfort the Broken-hearted, and to be the prospect of a Judgment to come must have been present with her, opening to her the prospect of those Mansions, where the Wicked cease from troubling, and the Righteous are at rest.

The threefold iniquity of Amnon in deceiving so grossly a Father so tenderly alive to his reasonable wants and wishes; in deflowering so lovely a daughter, whom, from the nearness of her connection with him, and especially from her assiduous and personal kindness towards him, he was most especially bound to honour and protect; and in ultimately discarding her as a Vagrant and outcast, instead of soothing her sorrows by reconciliation and union, must, of course, have agonized any Parent's bosom. But to One so susceptible of right David, the anguish occasioned to his mind must have been extreme, and that it was heightened, in no inconsiderable degree, by the painful recollection of his own but too recent transgressions, and the fearful apprehension that such an example may have left without restraint the youthful passion of his Son, and influenced him to set at naught the dictates of his conscience and the commands of his GOD. Indeed, one powerful deterrent in ourselves from the commission of sin should be the fear of the effect it may have in superintending the commission of it by Others, and the consequent aggravation, in the eyes of HEAVEN, of the enormity of our own.

The resentment borne by Absalom towards Amnon, for the dishonour done by him on his Sister, was but too natural, and, to a certain extent, was

not inconsistent with the precepts of Religion. Had Amnon taken to him Tamar to Wife, the Anger of his Brother might have been appeased; but by his not doing so, he was magnifying his guilt; and, in every day's continuance of his neglect of the Sister, was more deeply wounding the Brother's feelings: to hold converse with such a Man was not to be expected; and thus did sin shut out all access to that blissful communion, which exists where Brethren dwell together in unity: an union which David, who knew so well how to describe, knew also how justly to appreciate, and could not, therefore, but equally lament its absence especially among the Children of his own loins.

The passion of revenge is what the Spiritual Man will not venture to harbour in his bosom; for though he be angry, and most especially at the vice of his Fellow-Creatures, yet in the manifestation of that anger he sinneth not nor will he suffer the sun to go down or to rise upon his wrath. But the carnal Man, unhappily for himself, as well as for Others, is not like-minded; he forgetteth to Whom Vengeance Belongs, and, in the abuse of assumed power, chooseth himself to repay: thus we see in Absalom the vindictive disposition was cherished through the long lapse of two years, and at last burst forth to the shedding a Brother's blood, and that in an hour when his Soul was the least prepared to meet its MAKER, when the heart was merry with wine, and altogether set on the good things of this Life; at a time when no disposition to sorrow for sin, with that godly sorrow that worketh repentance, had been manifested. To what a succession of calamity did the ungoverned propensities of Amnon lead, and how fatally was the flame of them fanned by a Parent's indiscretion! Adultery and deliberate murder disarmed him of a Parent's moral authority; and by the fierceness of their glare, when reflected from mature age eclipsed the errors of youth. Deep as must have been the measure of David's distress at the conduct of his Son Amnon, yet that of Absalom must have greatly enlarged his sorrow, and still more embittered the reflections upon himself for having given Each such sanction from his example; but in proportion to his sense of his guilt, and his apprehension of the fatal consequences flowing from it was, doubtless, the sincerity of his repentance. Instead, therefore, of priding ourselves on being incapable of falling into so great iniquity, we should employ our thoughts, as arising out of these melancholy events, in gratitude to GOD for having hitherto Protected us by His HOLY SPIRIT, if happily He have not Done, from these so great sins; and by imploring Him in Mercy so to Continue to us His Grace, that we may escape therefrom, and from all other snares and temptations of the World, the flesh and the Devil, unto our Lives' end.

That Jonadab should have escaped from the punishment that his wicked counsel should seem to have merited, to an extent scarcely inferior to that of Amnon, is another argument in favour of that expectation of the Great Day when Men shall be Judged according to their works, and they, that have done good, shall be Blessed of their FATHER, Which is in Heaven: and they, that have done or counselled evil, shall feel the terrors of an everlastingly accusing conscience, and endure for ever the consciousness of The DIVINE Displeasure shut out alike from the Presence of the Visual Glory of their CREATOR, and from the hope of His Pardon and Reconciliation.

The judgment of David seems to have been clouded by a Parent's weakness and partiality: the beauty of Absalom's person misled him from considering the state of his heart, and from strenuously cultivating therein, with a Father's industry and anxiety, the growth of the more excellent and enduring beauties of the Soul; though, indeed, it was not for him, with the recollection of his own trespasses before him, to be extreme to mark what was done amiss by his Son and the separation from a beloved Child must have been received as an addi-

though but too justly-merited Chastisement of his own sins; yet still does rt of David's history, as affecting his Children, shew the importance of g into minds, at the earliest dawn of reason, the fear of The LORD and lience to His Word, as the only effectual means of keeping down the and increase of those worst passions of Man's nature, which, otherwise, eds in a neglected garden, quickly spring up and multiply therein. Had and Absalom been so taught by David, and taught with all the watchful- at is indispensably necessary to the forming, under the Countenance and ice of DIVINE Grace, right principles in the heart, how many bitter f self-condemnation and Parental sorrow would he have been spared! and xitable, therefore, for instruction or reproof to Others may this narrative, t is of distressing incidents, prove, if rightly applied!

*Now Joab, the Son of Zeruiah, perceived that the King's heart was toward and Joab sent to Tekoah, and fetched thence a wise Woman, and said, 'I pray thee, feign thyself to be a Mourner, and put on now mourning, and anoint not thyself with oil; but be as a Woman, that had a long time d for the Dead: and come to the King, and speak on this manner unto him.' b put the words in her mouth. And when the Woman of Tekoah spake to g, she fell on her face to the ground, and did obeisance, and said, 'Help, O And the King said unto her, 'What aileth thee?' And she answered, 'I ed a Widow-Woman, and mine Husband is dead: and thy Handmaid had s, and they two strove together in the field, and there was None to part them; but smote the Other, and slew him: and, behold, the whole Family is risen against landmaid, and they said, 'Deliver him that smote his Brother, that we may for the life of his Brother, whom he slew; and we will destroy the Heir also! they shall quench my coal which is left; and shall not leave to my Husband name nor Remainder upon the earth.' And the King said unto the Woman, thine house! and I will give charge concerning thee.' And the Woman of said unto the King, 'My Lord, O King, the iniquity be on me, and on my s house: and the King and his Throne be guiltless!' And the King said, ever saith ought unto thee, bring him to me! and he shall not touch thee any Then said she, 'I pray thee, let the King remember The LORD, thy that thou wouldest not suffer the Revengers of blood to destroy any more, lest troy my Son!' And he said, 'As The LORD Liveth, there shall not one hair Son fall to the earth.' Then the Woman said, 'Let thine Handmaid, I pray eak one word unto my Lord, the King!' And he said, 'Say on!' And the n said, 'Wherefore then hast thou thought such a thing against the People of for the King doth speak this thing, as One which is faulty, in that the loth not fetch home again his Banished: for we must needs die, and are as pilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again: neither doth GOD i any Person; yet doth He Devise Means that His Banished be not expelled Him. Now, therefore, that I am come to speak of this thing unto my Lord, ing, it is because the People have made me afraid; and thy Handmaid said, l now speak unto the King: it may be that the King will perform the request Handmaid: for the King will hear, to deliver his Handmaid out of the y of the Man that would destroy me and my Son together out of the Inheritance D. Then thine Handmaid said, 'The word of my Lord, the King, shall e comfortable; for as an Angel of GOD, so is my Lord, the King, to discern and bad: therefore The LORD, thy GOD, will be with thee.' Then the answered and said unto the Woman, 'Hide not from me, I pray thee, the at I shall ask thee!' And the Woman said, 'Let my Lord, the King, now !' And the King said, 'Is not the hand of Joab with thee in all this?' And oman answered and said, 'As thy Soul liveth, my Lord, the King, None can*

turn to the right hand or to the left from ought that my Lord, the King, hath spok for thy Servant Joab, he bade me, and he put all these words in the mouth of th Handmaid: to fetch about this form of speech hath thy Servant Joab done t thing: and my Lord is wise, according to the wisdom of an Angel of GOD, know all things, that are in the Earth.' And the King said unto Joab, 'Behc now, I have done this thing; go, therefore, bring the young Man Absalom agaa And Joab fell to the ground on his face, and bowed himself, and thanked the Kin and Joab said, 'To day thy Servant knoweth that I have found grace in thy sig my Lord, O King, in that the King hath fulfilled the request of his Servant.' Joab arose, and went to Geshur, and brought Absalom to Jerusalem. And King said, 'Let him turn to his own house; and let him not see my face.' Absalom returned to his own house, and saw not the King's face. But in all Ier there was None to be so much praised as Absalom for his beauty; from the sole of foot even to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him: and when he pol his head, (for it was at every year's end that he polled it; because the hair a heavy on him, therefore he polled it;) he weighed the hair of his head at two hund shekels after the King's weight. And unto Absalom there were born three Sons a one Daughter, whose name was Tamar; she was a Woman of a fair countenan So Absalom dwell two full years in Jerusalem and saw not the King's face: the fore Absalom sent for Joab, to have sent him to the King; but he would not come him; and when he sent again the second time, he would not come: therefore said unto his Servants, 'See, Joab's field is near mine; and he hath barley the go and set it on fire.' And Absalom's Servants set the field on fire. Then Je arose, and came to Absalom unto his house, and said unto him, 'Wherefore ha thy Servants set my field on fire?' And Absalom answered Joab, 'Behold, I a unto thee, saying, 'Come hither, that I may send thee to the King to say, 'Whe fore am I come from Geshur? it had been good for me to have been there stil now, therefore, let me see the King's face.' So Joab came to the King, and t him: and when he had called for Absalom, he came to the King, and bowed hi self on his face to the ground before the King; and the King kissed Absalom." 2 Sam. xiv.

It was, probably, the custom of the Jews at that time, as well as sub quently, to be addressed with most force and effect by parables: the instance Nathan has already been under review, and the mode thus adopted by Joab in effect, only another variety of that figurative appeal to the heart. If t King could speak pardon to a Stranger, though in a less degree offending agai the moral law of Brotherly love, and could interpose between the thirst f vengeance and its infliction, it was but reasonable to suppose he might be led a reversal of his sentence of personal banishment in favour of his own Son, mc especially since the offence, of which he had been guilty, had some degree palliation in it from the unrighteous cause in the base conduct of the Suffer that led to it; and still more as the continuance of the banishment had extend through four long years, in which the Parent's eye had never been gladden with the sight of a darling Son. Joab, therefore, shewed equally his o wisdom, and his devotion to the King's happiness in endeavouring, in the w he did, to bring about the reconciliation; and, notwithstanding his privity of t King's own crying offences, which left the single act of a Brother's blood, wh incited by a Sister's deflouring, but comparatively a minor offending, , would he not awaken in the King's mind the heart-rending recollection of w ought instantaneously, and in the earliest stage of the offence, to have obtain Absalom's pardon; but thus circuitously, and with a delicacy the most tent and refined, wrought his purpose of restoring Absalom to Jerusalem, and s waited the gradual approach of the season of perfect reconciliation on his Fathe

part. From all which, the exalted virtues and wisdom of David, with the unfortunate exceptions before enlarged upon, are inferable; and since the valiant and discreet Joab, the Commander-in-Chief of the Israelitish Armies, forbore to accuse, it would well become us to be more studious of avoiding than of censuring our Superior's errors; or when compelled to condemn the offence, yet rather to regard with compassion, than with contempt, its Perpetrator. To a mind so piously directed as was, generally, that of David, the argument on the uncertainty of this Life, and of the Forbearance and Mercy of The Gracious GIVER of it, and the Impartiality of His Judgment, must have been powerful; for (true indeed it is) we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again: neither doth GOD Respect any Person, yet doth He Devise Means that His Banished be not expelled from Him. And in whom more obviously were Those Means Exemplified than in David himself, whose Restoration to his Country, and Rescue from the persecuting spirit of Saul, had been so Miraculously Accomplished by the Especial Providence of GOD?

Whether Absalom's destruction of Joab's barley field was the suggestion of Joab himself, to give him a pretext for again interceding with David to become reconciled to his Son, may be questionable; but it is probable that his motive in the interference he made, was rather a desire to give peace and satisfaction to the mind of David, by healing the wound that the absence of his favourite Son occasioned, than any principle of extravagant partiality towards Absalom; and throughout this negotiation, the utmost tenderness of feeling in Joab for his Sovereign's happiness, and an equal reverence for his Sovereign's honour, are conspicuous. And truly gratifying must have been to him the consideration of the success, that attended his peace-making efforts. Had Joab ceased to be a Shedder of blood, how honourable would have been, in general contemplation, his old age, as the faithful Servant and firm Friend and trusty Counsellor of the most pious of Earthly Kings! But his future history, as we shall afterwards see, demonstrates a sad inconsistency of character, and the fiend-like influence of jealousy over a heart not otherwise insensible of, or inattentive to, the noblest of impulses.

The contemplation of King David restored, and by whose means, after four years' long and painful separation, to the chief Object of his Parental affections, when, as we shall presently see, those affections were ill placed, shews how our prejudices are apt to mislead our judgment, and how erroneous, frequently, is Man's estimate of his own happiness. A Father's partiality misled the otherwise penetrating and frequently Divinely Inspired mind of King David; and Joab, who was so faithful in allegiance to his Earthly Sovereign, was unmindful of that higher and paramount loyalty due to That LORD, Who Ruleth over all the Kingdoms of the Earth.

*"And it came to pass after this, that Absalom prepared him chariots and horses, and fifty Men to run before him: and Absalom rose up early, and stood beside the way of the gate; and it was so, that when any Man, that had a controversy, came to the King for judgment, then Absalom called unto him, and said, 'Of what City art thou?' and he said, 'Thy Servant is of One of the Tribes of Israel.' And Absalom said unto him, 'See, thy matters are good and right; but there is no Man deputed of the King to hear thee!' Absalom said moreover, 'Oh that I were made Judge in the Land, that any Man, which hath any suit or cause, might come unto me, and I would do him justice!' And it was so, that when any Man came nigh to him to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand and took him, and kissed him: and on this manner did Absalom to all Israel, that came to the King for judgment: so Absalom stole the hearts of the Men of Israel, And it came to*

pass after forty years, that Absalom said unto the King, 'I pray thee, let me go and pay my vow; which I have vowed unto The LORD in Hebron! for thy Servant vowed a vow, while I abode at Geshur in Syria, saying, 'If The LORD shall Bring me again indeed to Jerusalem, then I will serve The LORD.' And the King said unto him, 'Go in peace!' So he arose, and went to Hebron. But Absalom sent Spies throughout all the Tribes of Israel, saying, 'As soon as ye hear the sound of the trumpet, then ye shall say, 'Absalom reigneth in Hebron!' And with Absalom went two hundred Men out of Jerusalem, that were called; and they went in their simplicity, and they knew not any thing. And Absalom sent for Ahithophel, the Gilonite, David's Counsellor, from his City, even from Giloh, while he offered sacrifices; and the conspiracy was strong; for the People increased continually with Absalom. And there came a Messenger to David, saying, 'The hearts of the Men of Israel are after Absalom!' And David said unto all his Servants, that were with him at Jerusalem, 'Arise, and let us flee! for we shall not else escape from Absalom: make speed to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly, and bring evil upon us, and smite the City with the edge of the sword!' And the King's Servants said unto the King, 'Behold, thy Servants are ready to do whatsoever my Lord, the King, shall appoint.' And the King went forth, and all his Household after him; and the King left ten Women, which were Concubines, to keep the house: and the King went forth, and all the People after him, and tarried in a place that was far off: and all his Servants passed on beside him: and all the Cherethites, and all the Pelethites, and all the Gittites, six hundred Men, which came after him from Gath, passed on before the King. Then said the King to Ittai, the Gittite, 'Wherefore goest thou also with us? return to thy place, and abide with the King: for thou art a Stranger, and also an Exile: whereas thou camest but yesterday, should I this day make thee go up and down with us? seeing I go, whither I may: return thou, and take back thy Brethren: Mercy and Truth be with thee!' And Ittai answered the King, and said, 'As The LORD Liveth, and as my Lord, the King, liveth, surely in what place my Lord, the King, shall be, whether in death or life, even there also will thy Servant be.' And David said to Ittai, 'Go and pass over!' And Ittai, the Gittite, passed over, and all his Men, and all the little Ones, that were with him. And all the Country wept with a loud voice, and all the People passed over: the King also himself passed over the Brook Kidron; and all the People passed over toward the way of the Wilderness. And lo, Zadok also, and all the Levites were with him, bearing the Ark of the Covenant of GOD; and they set down the Ark of GOD: and Abiathar went up, until all the People had done passing out of the City. And the King said unto Zadok, 'Carry back the Ark of GOD into the City: if I shall find Favour in the Eyes of The LORD, He will Bring me again, and Shew me both It, and His Habitation. But if He thus Say, 'I have no Delight in thee!' Behold, here am I, let Him Do to me, as Seemeth Good unto Him!' The King said also unto Zadok, the Priest, 'Art not thou a Seer? return into the City in peace, and your two Sons, with you, Ahimaaz, thy Son, and Jonathan, the Son of Abiathar: see, I will tarry in the Plain of the Wilderness, until there come word from you to certify me.' Zadok therefore and Abiathar carried the Ark of GOD again to Jerusalem; and they tarried there. And David went up by the ascent of Mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot; and all the People, that was with him, covered every Man his head; and they went up, weeping as they went up. And One told David, saying, 'Ahithophel is among the Conspirators with Absalom.' And David said, 'O LORD, I pray Thee, Turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness!' And it came to pass, that when David was come to the top of the Mount, where he worshipped GOD, behold, Hushai, the Archite, came to meet him, with his coat rent and earth upon his head: unto whom David said, 'If thou passest

with me, then thou shalt be a burden unto me: but if thou return to the City and say unto Absalom, 'I will be thy Servant, O King; as I have been thy Father's servant hitherto, so will I now also be thy Servant!' then mayest thou for me defeat the counsel of Ahithophel! And hast thou not there with thee Zadok and Abiathar, the Priests? therefore it shall be, that what thing soever thou shalt hear out of the King's house, thou shalt tell it to Zadok and Abiathar, the Priests. Behold, they are there with them their two Sons, Ahimaaz, Zadok's Son, and Jonathan, Abiathar's son: and by them ye shall send unto me every thing that ye can hear!' So Hushai, David's Friend, came into the City; and Absalom came into Jerusalem. And when David was a little past the top of the Hill, behold, Ziba, the Servant of Mephibosheth, met him, with a couple of asses saddled, and upon them two hundred loaves of bread, and an hundred bunches of raisins, and an hundred of summer fruits, and a tithe of wine. And the King said unto Ziba, 'What meanest thou by these?' And he said, 'The asses be for the King's Household to ride on; and the bread and summer fruit for the young Men to eat; and the wine, that Such as be faint in the Wilderness may drink.' And the King said, 'And where is thy Master's Son?' And Ziba said unto the King, 'Behold, he abideth at Jerusalem: for he said, 'To my shall the House of Israel restore me the Kingdom of my Father.' Then said the King to Ziba, 'Behold, thine are all that pertained unto Mephibosheth!' And he said, 'I humbly beseech thee, that I may find grace in thy sight, my Lord, O King.'"—2 Sam. xv, and xvi, 1 to 4.

The perversion of judgment was the act of Absalom, but the blame of it was, doubtlessly, cast upon David, and as a false judgment corrupteth the heart, so the withholding a righteous one alienateth the affection; and, though the fountain of justice be pure, yet may, from the evil machinations of Others, its waters be poisoned, or the progress of their current be intercepted; so dangerous is the principle of favouritism in a King; so difficult is it for the Head of the Executive Power to watch over and prevent the intrigues and machinations of his accredited Ministers. David's fame had, doubtless, been established for a wise and impartial Judge among his People, and as not less willing than able to deal out justice unto All, that sought it; hence, therefore, in a great degree had flowed back upon him, in merited return, the love and veneration of his Subjects; and it was here that the artful and insinuating Absalom knew he stood so strong in his Subjects' esteem, that nothing short of a diametrically opposite system, however superinduced, could weaken his Father's hold on his Subjects' affections, and favour the daring and parricidal attempt at the overthrow of that Father's government and the substitution of his own. He, therefore, with all the craftiness that the spirit of rebellion—the more diabolical as stabbing a Father's fame—could suggest, placed himself between the Throne of Justice and its Supplicants, and intercepted the course of the chiefest benefit, that flows from a well-regulated Government. The next expedient resorted to by Absalom in his career of lawless ambition, after traducing the character of his Superior, and preventing him doing the good he was inclined to do, was the artful endeavour, by affected fondness and feigned condescension, to win to himself the hearts of All, who were bound by solemn allegiance of paramount love to Another. So deeply-rooted in the hearts of his Subjects was their love of David, that it took the long period of forty years (if such were the true history, though four years seems countenanced by some Commentators) to mature the hell-bred plot of Absalom, and to ripen his hope of a full harvest of success in his execrable enterprise; in all which time he seems to have veiled his fell purpose in the deepest hypocrisy, and to have led his Father to suppose him a Man of equal piety towards GOD, as of fidelity and devotion to his King: thus specious is oftentimes religious hypocrisy. Absalom lulled David into a fatal



unsuspectiveness of his unfilial intention, by glossing over his design with pious professions; thus, in the very commission of his evil purpose, proving a striking Authority for the well-merited reputation of David as a Lover and Promoter of piety in Others, as well as a Practiser of it himself; and the benediction with which he let his Son depart, was an evidence of that disposition and of the charity that flows from it,—“Go in peace!” The time for the disclosure, as Prophetically Foretold, of Absalom's dark and unnatural design having arrived, it is no longer made matter of concealment, but in the confidence of the maturity of his purpose and the certainty of its success, he throws off the veil and rears the standard of rebellion. David, who never seems to have doubted the Word of Prophecy, received the tidings with that humility and reverential submission to the Will of GOD, which the fear of The LORD, and the consciousness of having but too justly awakened His Displeasure, were calculated to excite. He knew that resistance would have been against HEAVEN; otherwise himself, a Man of war from his youth, and the Child, as it were, of Victory, with wisdom in his counsel and valour in his heart, supported, as he would have been, by a brave and faithful Band, could scarcely have failed to have overcome, or by an opposing front to have awed into subjection, the vain Spirit of his Son and the rebel Crew attached to him. But “*Have I Said, and shall I not Do it!*” were Words Issuing from the Throne of HEAVEN, and Sounding in his ears. To have opposed Absalom in Jerusalem would have been to have resisted the Decree of The ALMIGHTY; and to have added blasphemy to disobedience, involving Others, as well as himself, in a hopeless contest. He prudently, therefore, determined to withdraw from the City, and to seek in pious resignation for That Deliverance, Which, in an Acceptable Season, it might Accord with the Satisfied Justice and Merciful Disposition of The DIVINE DISPOSER of Events to Vouchsafe him; for he knew that a contrite Spirit The LORD would not Despise. Nor, indeed, is it easy, if possible, to find in history a more striking instance of humiliation than in the relinquishment by David of his throne, his palace, and his pleasures, to become an Outcast among the People he had faithfully served, and to be branded as a Coward amongst those he had so frequently led to triumph. And yet this very meekness must have been the best Soother of that sorrow, which his sin had occasioned him, and have sensibly weakened that anguish, which his altered estate was otherwise so calculated to raise in his heart. Another source of consolation, which, through the Mercy of GOD, is the frequent companion of adversity, was the unaltered and unalterable attachment and devotion to David of his true Friends—the willing Sharers in his misfortunes, whose regard for him was the fruit of his own virtues, and of which no storms of fate, no altered destiny in circumstances could rob him; but even in his acceptance of this balm of comfort to the Soul, he was actuated by the tenderest regard for the condition of Others. His own People he knew it would be to no purpose to urge to return unto the City of their Fathers, and to leave him at the mercy of Strangers; but Ittai, who had probably been a recent Visitor at his court, being an Exile from his own Country, he thought it unfair to involve in his calamity, and, therefore, in a manner the most gracious, proposed his seeking his personal safety, where it was most likely to be secured; but the Man of a generous heart disdains to shrink from a storm, when, by manfully meeting it, he may hope to lessen its fury against the head of One, whom he deservedly esteems: though driven, himself, from his native Land, and going with David he knew not whither, yet Ittai's veneration for the, to him foreign and exiled, King, was paramount to all selfish considerations, and must have proved a cheering cordial in that state of suffering to which David was exposed. In recommending Ittai to return to Jerusalem, it is further observable that David did not know but that he might

himself open to another Enemy; he, therefore, concludes his admonition ng. "Mercy and Truth be with thee!" thereby exhorting him that, if he had power or influence under the new Government, to use them with and in proportion as he had opportunity to manifest forth the excellence. True, indeed, it was that David seemed to need Mercy; and probable hat he trusted Truth would be finally triumphant. Ittai was almost a r to him; but the character of David was a Host to him even in the f his Enemies. Ittai's veneration and esteem, which grew out of that r, were confirmed on a personal acquaintance, and the expressions of a, which breathed from him, mark the truest magnanimity and the most pitch of friendship. Amidst the dispiriting sorrows that were pouring all sides around David, Ittai remained faithful to his pledge, and was bly bent on sharing the fortune of the Royal Exile of Jerusalem, g The GOD of Israel to Bear Witness to the sincerity of his professions: ough Absalom, his own Son, and the Child of his affection, had taken the f That LORD in vain, to the severe cost of David, yet was not the Latter ng to believe an Alien's promise, grounded on so solemn an appeal; and ived him, therefore, of his Escort.

withstanding the unfeigned regret manifested by the People, as David through them, and the fervent zeal which his immediate Followers in his cause, yet would he not avail himself of that disposition to assert aged rights; but from conscious offensiveness against the MAJESTY of EN, he bowed in un murmuring, though not unsorrowing, submission to dispensation, Which was to Satisfy DIVINE Justice; and he waited y that Season, which should vindicate the Ways of GOD to Man. Even our of GOD seems to have been a weightier consideration with him, own personal safety, for the Ark of The LORD, Which had been, in the ness of his Removal, brought along with him, and Which, by its con- e with him, might at least have awed his Enemies into a fear of using any d violence against him, he caused to be sent back reverently to Jerusalem. vid's piety led him to seek Salvation, from Whence alone It Cometh, even e Favour of GOD. "*And the King said unto Zadok, 'Carry back the e GOD into the City! if I shall find Favour in the Eyes of The LORD, l Bring me again, and Shew me both It and His Habitation.'*"

ne Omnipresence and Omnipotence of GOD are the pious Man's surest et consoling Refuge. On This ROCK of Salvation David, therefore, rested e, confident that, when the but too justly-merited season of Chastise- as over, though the Storm of DIVINE Anger might Beat furiously in the hile upon him, The SUN of Righteousness would Arise with Healing on 'ings, and Dissipate all his gloom. Conscious that vain is the help of gainst the Arm of The OMNIPOTENT, and that if The LORD did not t in him, it was equally vain to seek elsewhere the Soul's peace, he, there- nreservedly flung himself upon The DIVINE Mercy, in these emphatic addressed to the Priest, as the Oracle of GOD, "*If GOD thus Say, 'I have light in thee;' behold, here am I, let Him Do to me as Seemeth Good unto*

The Forbearance and Loving-Kindness of The LORD he had deeply id before devoutly acknowledged; and His Just Judgments it was equally ing in him to bend unto in pious resignation. He looked to The LORD OD of Mercy, and knew that better would it be to fall into the Hands of LORD, than into the hands of Man.

hough we owe it to A Good and Gracious GOD to be perfectly resigned Will, and contented with His Dispensations, yet it is not incompatible be fulfilment of that duty to avail ourselves of all opportunities, which His

Providence has Mercifully Placed within our reach, of extricating our from our temporal Enemies, and of checking the progress of general or individual injustice. David, therefore, though he had said, "*Let GOD Do to me, as Thou Good unto Him!*" yet bethought him, when in a situation so imminent hazardous to himself, to his Followers, and all his peaceable Subjects, he might adopt means to confound the malice, by distracting the councils of Enemies, and restore his beloved Jerusalem to its peace. He dismissed, therefore, the High-Priest, trusting that, as the Oracle of GOD, it would be with if GOD so Willed it, to bear to him by Kindred Messengers intelligence of Enemies' proceedings, that he might shape his course and regulate his accordingly. But whatever gleam of hope this scheme may have shot forth to see David, almost immediately after, in the bitterness of Soul, and in the deep humility, bending to the Rod of Chastisement Inflicted on him, and manifest at the same time, a sorrow so open, that All, who were with him, were overcome by it, and mingled, perhaps less from a sympathy with his sufferings, than compassion towards the fate of so beloved a King, their tears and wailings his. Yet large as the measure of David's anguish was at this time, we find no inconsiderable degree increased by the arrival of news that Ahithophel, his own wise Counsellor, had deserted his cause and traitorously sided with his Enemy: the power of that Man's mind David had, doubtless, frequently valued, and was justly apprehensive of its unfavourable influence towards him, if the counsel he might give were not counteracted. But David knew that as was Ahithophel, yet was there ONE Wiser and Mightier than he, Who could Bring to nought the counsel of the Wicked, and make their evil imaginings turn to their own destruction. In the fulness of this faith David, then, poured forth the prayer, "*O LORD, I pray Thee, Turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness!*" By the same holy dependance on the Power and Goodness of GOD, we see David continually actuated; and we may receive from thence the most salutary lesson for our own guidance and governance amidst every temptation, to which we may be exposed in our conflicts with the World, the flesh, or the Devil.

Still continuing his flight from that City, which his wisdom and valour so ennobled and aggrandized, he is consoled with by Hushai of Archite, who, probably, One of David's Counsel, a Man of sound wisdom and probity and discretion. This incident gave rise to a political expedient in the mind of David to overthrow the deep and wicked designs of the Arch-traitor Ahithophel, a highly revered and beloved was David by Hushai, that at the hazard of his life he acquiesces in the scheme. Deception was certainly here practised, in any shape and for any object is contrary to The SPIRIT of GOD; but it shews, of how little faith are the Worthiest and most Pious among us. The device, indeed, of David manifested a state of mind distrustful of the Interposition of DIVINE PROVIDENCE, Which could, in an instant, have found all the Wise of this World, and could have Brought that of Ahithophel to foolishness, and that too by causes strictly accordant with the ordinary operations of Nature, as by death, or even sickness, which might have reduced him to a state of imbecility.

From this interesting and generous character of Hushai, with what did we turn to the selfish and dishonest Ziba. Aware of the distresses that had overtaken the King, and conscious of his Master's affection for the Sufferer, and of his ardent desire to administer to the King's necessities, he visited him with the consolations of friendship and condolence, Ziba disguised the full purpose of Mephibosheth to visit David; and on the contrary, falsely accuses him of disaffection and disloyalty; artfully introducing him

considerate of the Royal wants, and bringing an offering to alleviate them, hoping to deceive the penetration of David, and looking forward, doubtless, to some probable benefit resulting to himself in the event of the civil war, as he might suppose probable, in David's favour: and indeed were wise, still probably the present he made was from the property of his and, consequently, of no detriment to himself in the making it: and had Mephibosheth fallen a sacrifice to the suspicions of David, or been exterminated by the sword of Absalom, as avowedly hostile to his cause, the whole of his might be looked to by Ziba as the reward of his services and the return for his loyalty. But Ziba heeded not that there was A GOD in Israel, Who looked upon his heart, and was Able, if Willing, to Blast his fell purpose. The voice of conscience saying within him, "Be sure your secret sin will come out," he had stifled, and the things of this World, which cannot serve as a grave, neither in the Eternity beyond it, he had wilfully suffered to pass by his eyes, and to dispossess him of the promised inheritance of those Riches which fade not away, but are Eternal in the Heavens: the sure Reward of the faithful and upright *Servant*, who maketh singleness of heart his guide, and dwells in his Soul in patience, waiting for that Day, which shall be the Rest of his labour, and make him equal in glory to his Master, and superior to him, or in that faith by which alone Salvation cometh. It may seem censurable in David so soon to give credit to a false representation, and to condemn, without a hearing, the Son of his dearest Friend; but amidst so much of disaffection and the persecution that so imminently threatened David himself, no time was allowed him for patient investigation; and the concurring circumstances of Mephibosheth's not coming in the hour of distress to him, who had so kindly comforted him, and of Ziba's narrative (which was so artfully supported by Mephibosheth's exposing him to the vengeance of Mephibosheth, and in bringing to David at a season of calamity, to which he could see no end, and in which he saw that very support he might himself be involved,) were indeed so calculated as most naturally to prevent suspicion, and induce to the conduct which was adopted in the promise, though from its very nature impliedly conditional, the things were as Ziba related, David would, if eventually restored to power, receive the wealth and inheritance of Mephibosheth to Ziba, as meritoriously as the One, and more justly forfeited by the Other.

And when King David came to Bahurim, behold, thence came out a Man of the House of Saul, whose name was Shimei, the Son of Gera: he came and cursed still as he came: and he cast stones at David, and at all the Servants of David: and all the People and all the mighty Men were on his right hand and left: and thus said Shimei, when he cursed, 'Come out, come out, thou bloody Man of Belial! The LORD hath Returned upon thee all the blood of the House of Saul, in whose stead thou hast reigned: and The LORD hath delivered the Kingdom into the hand of Absalom, thy Son: and, behold, thou art doing mischief, because thou art a bloody Man!' Then said Abishai, the Gittite, unto the King, 'Why should this dead dog curse my Lord, the King? let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head!' And the King said, 'Have I to do with you, ye Sons of Gittai? so let him curse, because The LORD hath said unto him, 'Curse David!' Who shall then say, 'Wherefore hast thou done so?' And David said to Abishai, and to all his Servants, 'Behold, my hand hath come forth of my bowels, seeketh my life: how much more now may this man do it? let him alone, and let him curse! for The LORD hath Bidden me to be that The LORD will Look on mine affliction, and that The LORD will make me Good for his cursing this day.' And as David and his Men went by, Shimei went along on the hill's side over against him, and cursed as he

*went, and threw stones at him, and cast dust. And the King and all the Pe that were with him, came weary, and refreshed themselves there.*"—2 Sam. xvi, 5 to

Unconscious of any blood-guiltiness towards the House of Saul, had David yielded to the ordinary dictates of worldly passion, he would have called vengeance to be inflicted on so unwarrantable an attack, coupled with much cowardice and cruelty from the season selected for making it. He would at once have yielded to the suggestion of Abishai, and made Shimei pay, on the spot, the seeming forfeit of his rashness; and Human policy might appear to call for such infliction of vengeance, lest the example of unpunished iniquity should spread to the diffusion of the same spirit of outrage; and thus Absalom's advance towards his Father's overthrow should be anticipated by the effect of Shimei's violence, and the impunity with which it was met. Nor was this the consideration that would have weighed in the scale of Man's wisdom; for violence was not only used towards David, but towards his most faithful Adherents; and if their wrongs were not allowed to be self-redressed, when means so readily offered, might it not be reasonably supposed, that the attachment would burst asunder, and that David would be left to his fate; and he withheld all exertion towards a favourable change of it. But David's Spirit, which was the offspring of a fervent piety, was so humbled before its God by the recollection of its sins, that even the furious Shimei he regarded as an Instrument of merited Resentment in the Hand of That GOD; so determined was he, in all circumstances and at every hazard, to shew the meekness of resignation to The DIVINE Chastisement. And, in so doing, how exalted in a Spiritual light does the character of David become; and what confirmatory testimony is thereby borne to the unfeigned sacredness of his character! Abishai's submission to the restraint imposed upon him, and still more by silence under the sharp accusation of inciting to the shedding of blood! "*that humbleth himself, shall be exalted;*" and "*Whom The LORD Loveth, Chasteneth.*" These were the encouraging Words, that brought to the Soul of David peace amidst persecution, and induced him to possess his Soul in patience till the Acceptable Season of The LORD should Come, when he would be Delivered out of the hands of all his Enemies, and especially from the influence of sin, which, more than all the World, was hostile to his Peace. In the 38th Psalm David then said within himself, "*LORD! all my desire is before Thee; and my groaning is not hid from Thee. They, that seek after my life, snares for me; and they, that seek my hurt, speak mischievous things. But in 1 O LORD, do I hope; Thou wilt Hear, O LORD, my GOD. For I will do mine iniquity; I will be sorry for my sin. Forsake me not, O LORD, my GOD, Be not Far from me! Make Haste to Help me, O LORD, my Salvation!*"—v. 9, 12, 15, 18, 21, 22. "*It may be that The LORD will Look on my affliction; and that The LORD will Requite me Good for his cursing this day.*"

With this silent prayer he contented himself under Shimei's violence, shielded himself from the effects of Abishai's unholy temptation; and to conduct on this occasion he probably afterwards adverted, when he said, "*I dumb, I opened not my mouth; because Thou, LORD, Didst it.*"—Ps. xxxix,

Such consolation is open to every pious Soul under trials and persecutions, and assuredly we know, for we have the Sure Promise of Him, Whose Promise never Fails, that it *will*, and not merely *may*, be, that The LORD will Look on our affliction here, and in the Life to Come will Requite us Good for it. And we not, therefore, with meekness and humble resignation, receive evil at the Hand of The LORD in the little span of our existence here, when we are therefore, Receive unto our Soul's comfort Infinite Good from That Same Gracious Hand, through the endless Life to Come?

*"And Absalom and all the People, the Men of Israel, came to Jerusalem, and Ahithophel with him. And it came to pass, when Hushai, the Archite, David's friend, was come unto Absalom, that Hushai said unto Absalom, 'GOD Save the King! GOD Save the King!' And Absalom said to Hushai, 'Is This thy wisdom to thy Friend? why wentest thou not with thy Friend?' And Hushai said unto Absalom, 'Nay, but whom The LORD, and this People, and all the Men of Israel choose, his will I be, and with him will I abide: and again, whom should I serve? should I not serve in the presence of his Son? as I have served in thy father's presence, so will I be in thy presence.'"*—2 Sam. xvi, 15 to 19.

It is impossible to deny with the honesty of unequivocating sincerity that Hushai dissembled, and dissembled with the Name of That GOD, Who is Truth itself, and Who Loveth no unrighteousness. The words in the Text, which in our translation of the Bible are construed "*GOD Save the King!*" will, it seems from the margin of the same Authority, bear the interpretation, "*May the King live!*" but to ask of The AUTHOR of Life for the continuance of that Life, as a King, which in his heart, he wished terminated as far as Kingly honour and power at least went, was a mockery, and cannot be reconciled with the Dictates of The SPIRIT of Grace, Which are Pure and Free from all guile. This cometh of that littleness of faith, which only at times and at seasons putteth its trust in Superintending PROVIDENCE, and doth not set The LORD always before it, but savoureth at intervals of the wisdom of this World, which is foolishness in the Sight of GOD. But, nevertheless, the influence of Human pride may be checked by this demonstration of worldly arts being overcome by a more subtle worldly policy: and the lesson learnt from thence, that how great soever may seem the penetration of the Human judgment when resting on its own powers, there is, nevertheless, no effectual security against the being surprised and overthrown by the machinations and artifices of Others. Absalom, whose schemes for assuming the government of his Country, even to the dispossession of his father, had been so long and deeply laid, and were then almost at the very point of success, was yet lulled into a fatal confidence in the professions of Hushai, and led to cherish an Enemy in his bosom, admitting him even to his Chambers of Council. However, therefore, we must withhold our approbation from the means through which such a fatal confidence was generated in a Man of sin, even by taking the Name of The LORD in vain, yet must we not deny that the servants of Sin from thence may derive further discouragement against continuing in the employ of a Master, not only so deceiving himself, but so liable to be deceived by Others; and turn to That LORD and MASTER, Whose Word enlighteneth the Soul, Leading it, through the peaceful paths of a conscience void of offence towards GOD and towards Man, unto the Mansions of Ineffable delight in the Life to Come, and which will be without end.

*"Then said Absalom to Ahithophel, 'Give counsel among you, what we shall do!' And Ahithophel said unto Absalom, 'Go in unto thy Father's Concubines, which he hath left to keep the house! and all Israel shall hear that thou art abhorred of thy Father: then shall the hands of All, that are with thee, be strong.' So they made Absalom a tent upon the top of the house: and Absalom went in unto his father's Concubines in the sight of all Israel. And the counsel of Ahithophel which he counselled in those days, was as if a Man had inquired at the Oracle of GOD: so was all the counsel of Ahithophel both with David and with Absalom. Moreover Ahithophel said unto Absalom, 'Let me now choose out twelve thousand men, and I will arise and pursue after David this night; and I will come upon him, while he is weary and weak handed, and will make him afraid: and all the people, that are with him, shall flee: and I will smite the King only: and I will bring all the People unto thee: the Man, whom thou seekest, is as if All returned:*

so all the People shall be in Peace.' And the saying pleased Absalom well, and the Elders of Israel. Then said Absalom, 'Call now Hushai, the Archite, and let us hear likewise what he saith!' And when Hushai was come to Absalom, Absalom spake unto him, saying, 'Ahithophel hath spoken after this manner: we do after his saying? if not, speak thou!' And Hushai said unto Absalom, 'The counsel, that Ahithophel hath given, is not good at this time: for, said Hushai, Thou knowest thy Father and his Men, that they be mighty Men, and they be ch in their minds, as a bear robbed of her whelps in the field; and thy Father Man of war, and will not lodge with the People: behold, he is hid now in some or in some other place; and it will come to pass, when Some of them be overth at the first, that Whosoever heareth it will say, 'There is a slaughter among the People, that follow Absalom!' and he also, that is valiant, whose heart is as the heart of a lion, shall utterly melt: for all Israel knoweth that thy Father is a mighty Man, and they, which be with him, are valiant Men: therefore I counsel that all Israel be generally gathered unto thee, from Dan even to Beersheba, as the sand that is by the Sea for multitude; and that thou go to battle against thine own Person: so shall we come upon him in some Place, where he shall be found, and we will light upon him as the dew falleth on the ground: and of him of all the Men, that are with him, there shall not be left so much as One. Moreover, if he be gotten into a City, then shall all Israel bring ropes to that City, and we will draw it into the river, until there be not one small stone found there.' Absalom and all the Men of Israel said, 'The counsel of Hushai, the Archite, is better than the counsel of Ahithophel.' For The LORD had Appointed to do the good counsel of Ahithophel; to the intent that The LORD might Bring down upon Absalom."—2 Sam. xvi, 20 to 23, and xvii, 1 to 14.

Traitor as was Ahithophel to his King, he was not less an Apostate from the true faith in his GOD. But wonderful is the Power of That GOD, Who Maketh even the wrath of Man to serve Him! The heinous offence of David, though done in secret and remote from the eye of Man, yet open to the Eye of The LORD, Which is over All, Beholding the Evil and the Good, was visited with the Punishment of dethronement and degradation; and Ahithophel, whose counsel was regarded as the Oracle of GOD for keenness and penetration, was instrumental to the furtherance of The DIVINE Purpose; though his heart was by no means in the matter from any zeal for The LORD'S Service, for he was even ignorant of The DIVINE Resolve, and of the Prophetic Announcement of It, in the words of Nathan: "Thus Saith The LORD, 'Behold, I will Raise up evil against thee out of thine own House, and I will Take thy Wives before thine eyes, and Give them unto thy Neighbour, and he shall lie with thy Wives in sight of this sun: for thou didst it secretly: but I will Do this thing before all Israel and before the sun.'" Yet, though Ahithophel was made ignorantly, he was not innocently the means of accomplishing this Prediction, and fulfilling the Will of the Allwise DISPOSER of Events, by counselling both Absalom's rebellion, and his almost incestuous intercourse with his Father's Concubines: his heart sacrificed at the shrine of Moloch, and trampled on the Oracles of The GOD of Israel, Whose Doctrines were Fraught from the Beginning with the Inculcation of humility, resignation, Brotherly love, forbearance and charity. How long Ahithophel had been favouring the ambition of Absalom, and fanning the flame of civil discord, before he openly avowed himself as the Enemy of the lawful King, is matter of conjecture; but deep as was in general the penetration of David, his mind seems to have been unsuspecting of this aspiring Foe to peace; and his iniquity had withheld The GOD of his adoration from Unveiling the deception. In the character of Ahithophel, thus set before us, is instantaneously instanced the danger of Human reason, even in its vastest reach, when reject

the controul of Spiritual meekness and the Guidance of Spiritual Light: the wisdom of this World is, indeed, foolishness with GOD; and mighty as was the mind of Ahithophel, yet when it ceased to yield obedience to The DIVINE Will, what diabolical purposes did it submit itself, and what vile conduct did it assume in Another, when advising the only act that seemed capable of utterly extinguishing all disposition to reconciliation between the Father and his Son. Having worked upon the gay and youthful heart of Absalom to commit almost incestuous adultery, confident thereby of having for ever stifled, in the Son's bosom, the hope of his Father's forgiveness, and by the publicity of the encouraged offence having "taught Men so," he proceeds in the unsatiated spirit of the evil One, whose willing Servant he had become by this damnable prostitution of his talents, to extend the work of desolation. For not satisfied with his public degradation of his old and kind and venerable Master, or fearing that amidst the changeeful scenes of protracted warfare the arm of David might prevail, and, moreover, forgetful or, at least, regardless of that indisputable truth, which experience must have confirmed to him, "*that the Victory is The LORD'S,*" and that He Alone Saveth by Many or by Few, Ahithophel counsels the immediate assemblage of a chosen military Force, and its instantaneous advance upon the almost abandoned and enfeebled King, when bodily suffering through deprivations and fatigue, operating with the still more afflictive sensations arising from the sudden and awful change of his condition, attributable to a cause so surcharged with painful reflection, would bow him to the lowest state of helplessness and submission. And had this hateful counsel been followed, in all Human probability, the mischievous end it aimed at would have been attained, for as David resisted not Shimei, neither would he, at that time, probably, have opposed Ahithophel. But for the consolation of All, who have sinned, however grievously, and who, in a godly sorrow for their sins, will turn unto The LORD, that He may have Mercy upon them, they will find that He is not Extreme to mark what is done amiss. And that Whomsoever The LORD Chasteneth He loveth, and however He may Visit them with the Rod for a while, yet will He not always Withhold His Staff of Support, nor finally Let their Enemies triumph over them; and that for their Salvation He Turneth the counsel of the Wicked to naught, and Blunteth equally their arms and their purpose. Had Ahithophel been faithful to his GOD, he would have been loyal to his King; and amidst the generation that has been paid in the long lapse of succeeding Generations, and still, in all future ages, be continued to be paid to David, would a portion of applause have been directed to Ahithophel; and amongst the glorious Constellation of the Patriarchs and Prophets and wise Men of old, his name might have been conspicuous; but he discarded the better part, and sold himself to work evil in Israel; so that execration has been heaped upon his memory.

The summons of Hushai to the Counsel, though the free and unrestrained act of Absalom, was Foreknown of GOD, and intended by His Gracious Providence to be as in an equally unrestrained order of events accessory to the eminent and submissive David's preservation. Hushai, knowing the state of David's mind (for though a Man of war, David was then in no mood for warfare, but sought his safety under GOD in the stratagem of counsel), and intent upon the object of saving his Monarch's life, even at the hazard of his own, dealt treacherously with his heart, and, conscious of the soundness of Ahithophel's device, ransacked his brains for a scheme to disappoint it; and an ingenious one he suggested, supporting it with reasoning so artful and plausible, that even Ahithophel, if not convinced, was silenced by it. He first qualifies his opposition by confining it to a particular season, "the counsel that Ahithophel hath given is not good *at this time*;" he then touches forcibly on the characteristic bravery of



David and those who adhered to him, heightened, at that time, by chagrin and vexation, and illustrates it by the strong and emphatic simile of the reckless exasperated rage of a she-bear bereaved of her young ones; he then alludes to David's martial skill, as well as valour, and paints him as already sheltered by fastnesses, and waiting the opportunity to burst on his unsuspecting foe, as the probable effect of even a partial success in David, a general panic in the Followers of Absalom, and their consequent dispersion and defeat knowing that the gaining of time to David, by the suspension of Absalom's operations, was of the most essential importance, he not only advises abandonment of Ahithophel's plan, which would have effectually defeated its object, but suggests another, which would infallibly attain it; and so general is weakness to wickedness, that, to his own destruction, as we shall see, Absalom followed it. This was, the assemblage of All Israel, and the assertion by Absalom himself of the supreme command of the Host; and the probable result of so powerful an advance in its favour, namely, that, if David were to attempt a fastness, he would be surrounded—if in a City, the very City itself should be razed to the ground, and, of course, its Inhabitants be collectively or individually open to destruction. The adoption by Absalom of this counsel of Hushai, to have been, "*for that The LORD had Appointed* (or as the margin Bible hath it, Commanded) *to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, to the intent that The LORD might Bring evil upon Absalom.*" That The LORD does good out of evil, is a position as full of comfort as of truth; and that He makes the Guilty often the Victims of their own wicked purposes, is evidence general as well as Scriptural History. But that His SPIRIT, Which is Himself, Dictated the counsel of insincerity is not necessary to believe; enough to know that The LORD is ever Watchful over the interests of All who love and trust in Him, and that, without Seeming to Step beyond the Outer Limits of His Providence, He can Visit them with Salvation, and can easily Confound the bloody as the deceitful Man, who are alike an abomination to Him.

△ "Then said Hushai unto Zadok and to Abiathar, the Priests, 'Thus and so did Ahithophel counsel Absalom and the Elders of Israel: and thus and so I counselled: now therefore send quickly, and tell David, saying, 'Lodge in the night in the plains of the Wilderness; but speedily pass over: lest the King be swallowed up, and all the People, that are with him!' Now Jonathan and Ahimaaz stayed by En-rogel, for they might not be seen to come into the City: a Woman went and told them; and they went and told King David. Never did a Lad see them, and told Absalom; but they went both of them away quickly, and came to a Man's house in Bahurim, which had a well in his court; whither they went down: and the Woman took and spread a covering over the well's mouth, and spread ground corn thereon; and the thing was not known: and when Absalom's Servants came to the Woman to the house, they said, 'Where is Ahimaaz and Jonathan?' And the Woman said unto them, 'They be gone over the Brook Barai.' And when they had sought, and could not find them, they returned to Jerusalem. And it came to pass, after they were departed, that they came to the well, and went and told King David, and said unto David, 'Arise, and pass quickly over the Water; for thus hath Ahithophel counselled against you!' David arose, and all the People, that were with him, and they passed over the Water by the morning light: there lacked not One of them, that was not gone over the Water. And when Ahithophel saw, that his counsel was not followed, he saddled his ass, and arose, and gat him home to his house, to his City, and put his Household in and hanged himself, and died; and was buried in the sepulchre of his Father. 2 Sam. xvii, 15 to 23.

Into what dreadful depths of folly and misery will the disappointed pride of Man plunge him! Ahithophel, so late regarded as the Oracle of GOD, finding his advice rejected, though tending to involve his lawful Sovereign and kind Master in temporal ruin, gives up the hope of all satisfaction in the Life that is, and in the wilful blindness of despair, rushes unbidden, with all his sins unrepented of and confirmed, into the Presence of his Incensed GOD: leaves the only state where, by contrition and amendment, the Wrath of That GOD he might have appeased; and shuts the only inlet to DIVINE Pardon and Reconciliation. He could not have doubted of the Immortality of the Soul, nor of a Righteous Judgment Awaiting every One, when the Soul shall put on its Immortality; but he fell, from yielding to the same weakness, that lost Satan Heaven: reasoning pride was his sin, and to its indulgence all was sacrificed. Had but an humble Spirit belonged to him, he would, on reflection, have rejoiced that his counsel, which savoured not of the things that should be, had failed of its promised end, and that the blood of his King might not be laid to his charge; though the mistaken zeal, with which he had attempted to serve Another, would have involved that crime. How high was the state from which Ahithophel fell; to what an awful pit of destruction did his disappointed pride sink him! He sold himself to sin, and became the Child of the Devil, leaving to future Ages the not unstructive lesson of the hateful career and frightful end of Ambition, which thus led him at first, perhaps, but by faintly perceptible degrees, though eventually by rapid and gigantic strides to disaffection, alike from his Heavenly KING and his Earthly Sovereign, and, in the end, to Self-murder; by that last act of his life here, hastening the advent of that rule of Satan over his whole Soul, which, however in misery, exceeding all that can enter into the mind of Man, will yet leave no interval for sleep to absorb the sense of pain—will shed no one ray of hope amidst the everlasting night of despair, nor suffer the Second Death at the Judgment to separate the Soul from its sense of torture. To have lost such an Enemy, who, with all his wisdom, could not apply it to the governance of his own passions, and was in open rebellion against the Law of his GOD (and that too in the very season, when by the partial detection of Hushai's schemes for David's protection the mischievous imaginations of Ahithophel would have been so likely to have developed, by contrast, their preference), must have imparted the balm of consolation to the afflicted bosom of David, and confirmed his holy hope of GOD'S Continued Regard for him. The constancy of his true Friends, in their adherence to his cause, must still further have cherished his faith in The DIVINE Mercy towards him. And the application of these Historical Incidents may be universally useful, if made an operating example in us, not to faint, whilst the Judgments of The LORD are upon the Earth, but to possess our Souls in patience, waiting for the final Manifestation of DIVINE Favour, when all things shall redound to the Glory of The LORD, and to the consummation in Bliss of the hope of His Saints. In this fresh instance of David's Deliverance, it may not be undeserving of consideration, that one Instrument of it in the Hands of PROVIDENCE was so humble a Character as a *Servant Girl*, whose fidelity towards her Employers, and active zeal in their service, by regularly communicating the messages delivered to her, and watching every chance of detection and disappointment at the peril of her life, with no other prospect of reward, perhaps, than the approbation of her Master and of her own conscience, are exemplary. The Sons of the Priests owed their preservation, under GOD, to the prudence and devotedness of another Female, also in comparatively humble life, but who freely hazarded her own life, at least, in her resolute spirit to save the Lives of Others, and, perhaps, with a feeling of loyalty towards her rightful King, though driven into exile.

The true Riches and the only valuable Honours are open alike to the Rich, to the High and Low, to the Learned and Unlearned; the duty, stedfastly pursued, leads infallibly to them both; for the true Riches of those of an approving conscience, and the worthiest of Honours are to be found high in the Favour of The LORD; and in the power of attaining unto the Master is not before the Servant. The religious faith and pious offices even a Slave may contribute to the deliverance of the Soul of One, who, however exalted, may, for a time, be suffering under the effects of sin, and restore departed peace. Let every One, therefore, work while it is day, in which work the hand findeth to do in its peculiar situation, having the fear of the LORD always present; lest the night come, when no Man can work, and without talent, that has been unprofitably hid in a napkin, will be exposed in its rust and uselessness, to the endless confusion and dismay of the Servant who has so negligently abused it.

△ *"Then David came to Mahanaim. And Absalom passed over Jordan with all the Men of Israel with him. And Absalom made Amasa Captain of the Host instead of Joab: which Amasa was a Man's Son, whose name was Ishai an Israelite, that went in to Abigail, the Daughter of Nahash, Sister to Zeruiah, Mother. So Israel and Absalom pitched in the Land of Gilead. And it came to pass, when David was come to Mahanaim, that Shobi, the Son of Nahash, of the Children of Ammon, and Machir, the Son of Ammiel, of Gilead, and Barzillai, the Gileadite of Rogelim, brought beds, and basins, and vessels, and wheat, and barley, and flour, and parched corn, and beans, and and parched pulse, and honey, and butter, and sheep, and cheese of kine, for David and for the People, that were with him, to eat: for they said, 'The People is weary and thirsty in the Wilderness.'"*—2 Sam. xvii, 24 to 29.

Availing himself of the counsel, that was so graciously communicated to him, David continues his retreat in the order and with the rapidity of a military movement, but under the hardships and privations to which such movements are liable; nor was it long before Absalom, following the advice of Hushai, placing himself at the head of all the Men of Israel, who had not joined the fortunes of David, advanced in the direction that David had taken, selected for the Military Head of his Army One of the warlike Family, to which the distinguished Captains and Leaders of David's Armies belonged. In withstanding this eager and formidable pursuit after David, yet, through the Mercy of his GOD, did he find Help in the fearful time of need; and so wonderful are the Operations of DIVINE Grace upon the heart of Man, that though David was persecuted almost to the death by the Child of his bosom, who was upheld and supported by the own Brother of him, whom he had slain, whose Country he had rendered tributary to the triumphant power of Absalom, who had before seen was Hanun, who was also the Son of Nahash, how David's difficulties have been magnified, not only by the withholding from him the supplies so necessary for the recruiting the exhausted strength of his Followers, but by co-operating with Absalom have overwhelmed his Enemies, as well before as behind, since by such an alliance, Shobi, perhaps, have made his own terms with Absalom for the future emancipation of his Country from its tributary yoke, and the heavy punishments inflicted upon him even at David's hands [see ch. xii, 31]. Neither was this the only help that unexpectedly, perhaps, but so generously instrumental to the comfort and aid amidst the trials that surrounded him. Machir, with whom Ziba, the treacherous servant of the helpless Mephibosheth, had resided, and who, by the crooked policy of that faithless One, might have been influenced by him to

the countenance of Absalom, in order that under any change of fortune destructive of the re-establishment of David and confirmatory of the predominance of Absalom, Ziba might have a Friend at court, stood prominently forward, of his own free will (though he had before been the Shelterer of the fallen House of Saul), to give succour to him, whom Saul had denounced, and had unceasingly executed as his Enemy; and that too at a season when the absence of such succour might have plunged the Object of it in irretrievable ruin. Nor was the kind Contributor of this most seasonable bounty to David, from his extreme age and the consequent probability of his shrinking from the exertion of taking part with either of the conflicting Powers, in circumstances such as might render it probable, that assistance would so effectually be afforded by him to David; when the consequence of it, in the event of Absalom's success, might not improbably be, that his grey hairs would be brought with sorrow to the grave. But the salted character of David won him love and admiration and support from even lions from the Commonwealth of Israel; though those of his own Household did raise their heel against his peace.

*"And David numbered the People that were with him, and set Captains of thousands and Captains of Hundreds over them. And David sent forth a third part of the People under the hand of Joab, and a third Part under the hand of Abishai, the Son of Zeruiah, Joab's Brother, and a third Part under the hand of Ittai, the Gittite. And the King said unto the People, 'I will surely go forth with you myself also!' But the People answered, 'Thou shalt not go forth: for if we be away, they will not care for us; neither, if half of us die, will they care for us; it now Thou art worth ten Thousand of us: therefore now it is better that Thou recover us out of the City.' And the King said unto them, 'What seemeth you best I will do.' And the King stood by the gate side, and all the People came out by hundreds and by Thousands. And the King commanded Joab and Abishai, and Ittai, saying, 'Deal gently for my sake with the young Man, even with Absalom!' And all the People heard when the King gave all the Captains charge concerning Absalom. So the People went out into the field against Israel: and the battle was in the wood of Ephraim; where the People of Israel were slain before the Servants of David, and there was there a great slaughter that day of twenty thousand Men: for the battle was there scattered over the face of all the Country; and the wood devoured more People that day, than the sword devoured."—2 Sam. xviii, 1 to 8.* △

The consummate military skill of David seems at all times conspicuous; and notwithstanding the hope, that must have been in him, that the Arm of The LORD would be Put forth in his favour, yet does he put forth all his faculties of mind and body to work out, by DIVINE Permission, his own salvation. To that end he marshals his Forces, and appoints over them Commanders of the most tried experience, offering himself to take his part in the awful conflict; for personal valour was, not less than military skill, a feature in his admirable and exemplary character. But his People's love towards him was too ardent to allow of his unnecessarily risking his Personal safety; they urged him, therefore, to remain with the Reserve, that if the tide of battle went against his Army in the field, he might, in the City, stand a siege, and preserve himself for the more auspicious day of victory. For his sake they had already, it is true, endured much, hungry and thirsty and faint and weary, they had well nigh perished in the Wilderness, had it not been for succours that might not in future with certainty be calculated upon; and had they but surrendered up David to Absalom, they would have been allowed to return to their homes in peace, and have been morally, perhaps, reinstated in their former possessions and employments; but their sense of the duties they owed to their beloved Master, whom they now only served, forbade this; and so devoted were they to that service, that for the

advancement of it, and in furtherance of their object of effectuating his deliverance, they tender the sacrifice of their Lives by Thousands, holding that but a becoming offering of patriotism for the protection of so good and gifted a King. With what impressions of gratification must David have received this noble and ingenuous mark of his People's devotedness to his cause! How palliative of his sufferings must have been his recurrence to that past conduct of his, which had so worked upon the best passions of so Many of the brightest Ornaments of his Country, and the most zealous Observers of the sacred rites and cherished Precepts of his GOD! But still the natural affection was not to be entirely absorbed either in self-love, or in those attachments, which were thus so powerfully excited in him; the tie of Parental endearment was not to be broken: and amidst every preparation for a war, on which so much was to depend, in which the Lives of Thousands had been self-offered to purchase his ransom from the state of imminent peril awaiting him, in a war wholly attributable to the impious and parricidal conduct of his own Son, David asks, with all the tenderest feelings of a Father, to have the life of that his rebellious and unnatural Child spared,—a Man, in the comparison with whom, as far as intrinsic merit could weigh, the life of the meanest Individual among David's Followers could not fairly be put in competition.

△ *"And Absalom met the Servants of David. And Absalom rode upon a mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and his head caught hold of the oak, and he was taken up between the heaven and the earth; and the mule that was under him went away: and a certain Man saw it, and told Joab, and said, 'Behold, I saw Absalom hanged in an oak.' And Joab said unto the Man that told him, 'And, behold, thou sawest him, and why didst thou not smite him there to the ground? and I would have given thee ten shekels of silver and a girdle.' And the Man said unto Joab, 'Though I should receive a thousand shekels of silver in mine hand, yet would I not put forth mine hand against the King's Son; for in our hearing the King charged thee and Abishai and Ittai, saying, 'Beware that None touch the young Man, Absalom!' otherwise I should have wrought falsehood against mine own life: for there is no matter hid from the King; and thou thyself wouldst have set thyself against me.' Then said Joab, 'I may not tarry thus with thee.' And he took three darts in his hand, and thrust them through the heart of Absalom; while he was yet alive in the midst of the oak. And ten young Men, that bare Joab's armour, compassed about, and smote Absalom and slew him."—2 Sam. xviii, 9 to 15.*

Destructive as was the wood by its pits or otherwise, to the Men of Absalom, yet was its work of destruction, as instrumental to The DIVINE Decree of Deliverance to David, not thereby complete; the haughty and ambitious spirit of Absalom itself was yet to be sacrificed to its power. "*Cursed be he, that hangeth on a tree!*" was one of the maxims of the Decalogue; and cursed indeed, in his own contemplation, must have been the folly of Absalom when raising him to such a bad pre-eminence among his panic-stricken and overthrown Followers, he found himself destitute and helpless before his victorious Foes: for faint, indeed, must have been his hope of rescue, and still fainter his expectation of pardon from so injured a Father and so insulted a King; but the termination of his career, so profligately run, was Decreed in the Councils of The MOST HIGH. But before this closing scene of a bad life is further contemplated, it is of absolute justice to pay the tribute of praise to the instance of noble disinterestedness and unshaken loyalty, which was manifested in the conduct of the common Soldier, who first communicated to the General the peculiar and helpless situation of Absalom. Money and rank (of which latter the girdle, it is presumed, was a badge) were offered him to hasten a death, which an absence of all relief from such a situation, might bring on only more

painfully and lingeringly, and which might be easily, to Man's limited vision, attributed to the ordinary chances of war and the indiscriminate assault of flying Numbers: but the virtue of loyalty towards a good and estimable King is not confined to rank or station: the lowest Soldier in an Army may be influenced by it, and in that influence will find more of inward satisfaction than the highest rank can intrinsically yield. Had this conduct of an Inferior, so calculated for reproof to the opposing and sanguinary wish of Joab, been but acceptable to him, it might have proved profitable towards securing him from the offence of bloody-mindedness, and spared him the pangs, which, in the Great Account, will arise to the Soul on the recollection of its having been the willing Victim of such a merciless disposition. And not only did the Soldier remind Joab of David's earnest request to spare Absalom's life, rejecting himself the tempting offer made him under circumstances so favourable to concealment, but he bore testimony, at the same time, to the deep discernment and penetration of David's mind, and thus proved David to possess the love of his Soldiers equally for his wisdom as for his valour; but the pride and revengeful spirit of Joab was not to be subdued by the honest virtue and faithful loyalty of One so beneath him in rank; yet could he not find argument sophistically to overcome the reasoning of One so much his Inferior: his will was the law he alone consulted, and that will, inflated by the fierce breath of vengeance perhaps at the remembered injury done by Absalom to his property in burning his field-crops, dictated destruction. He might have thought 'there will be no peace in Israel while Absalom lives,' and so justified to himself the resolve to cut short that life; and Absalom's doom was sealed in death. In that death what a lesson is offered to the Votaries of ambition! How different were the hopes of Absalom, when, flushed with his early success, he sallied forth from Jerusalem, bent on a fond Father's destruction! He, who might have inherited the Kingdom of Israel, in laying claim to it before the time of succession, influenced by principles so at variance with the Laws of GOD and Man, lost not only a *corruptible*, but, not improbably also, an *incorruptible* Crown. Had one of the earliest Precepts taught him, "Honour thy Father, that thy days may be long in the Land, which The LORD thy GOD Giveth thee," been but cherished in his heart, how different would have been his life, how different too his death!

*"And Joab blew the trumpet, and the People returned from pursuing after Israel: for Joab held back the People. And they took Absalom, and cast him into a great pit in the Wood, and laid a very great heap of stones upon him: and all Israel fled, every One to his tent. Now Absalom, in his life time, had taken and reared up for himself a pillar, which is in the King's Dale: for he said, 'I have no Son to keep my name in remembrance:' and he called the pillar after his own name: and it is called unto this day, 'Absalom's Place.' Then said Ahimaaz, the Son of Zadok, 'Let me now run and bear the King tidings, how that The LORD hath Avenged him of his Enemies!' And Joab said unto him, 'Thou shalt not bear tidings this day; but thou shalt bear tidings another day: but this day thou shalt bear no tidings, because the King's Son is dead.' Then said Joab to Cush, 'Go tell the King what thou hast seen!' And Cush bowed himself unto Joab, and ran. Then said Ahimaaz, the Son of Zadok, yet again to Joab, 'But howsoever, Let me, I pray thee, also run after Cush!' And Joab said, 'Wherefore wilt thou run, my Son, seeing that thou hast no tidings ready?' But howsoever, said he, 'Let me run!' And he said unto him, 'Run?' Then Ahimaaz ran by the way of the Plain, and overran Cush. And David sat between the two gates: and the Watchmen went up to the roof over the gate unto the wall, and lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, a Man running alone: and the Watchman cried, and told the King. And the King said, 'If he be alone, there is tidings in his mouth.' And he*

came apace, and drew near. And the Watchman saw another Man running: and the Watchman called unto the Porter, and said, 'Behold, another Man running alone!' And the King said, 'He also bringeth tidings.' And the Watchman said, 'Me thinketh the running of the Foremost is like the running of Ahimaaz, the Son of Zadok.' And the King said, 'He is a good Man, and cometh with good tidings.' And Ahimaaz called, and said unto the King, 'All is well!' And he fell down to the earth upon his face before the King, and said, 'Blessed be The LORD, thy GOD, Which hath Delivered up the Men, that lifted up their hand against my Lord, the King!' And the King said, 'Is the young Man Absalom safe?' And Ahimaaz answered, 'When Joab sent the King's Servant, and me, thy Servant, I saw a great tumult, but I knew not what it was.' And the King said unto him, 'Turn aside, and stand here!' And he turned aside and stood still. And behold, Cush came; and Cush said, 'Tidings, my Lord, the King! for The LORD hath Avenged thee this day of all them that rose up against thee!' And the King said unto Cush, 'Is the young Man Absalom safe?' And Cush answered, 'The Enemies of my Lord, the King, and All, that rise against thee to do thee hurt, be as that young Man is!' And the King was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, 'O my Son Absalom, my Son, my Son, Absalom! Would GOD I had died for thee, O Absalom, my Son, my Son!'—2 Sam. xviii, 16 to 33.

The death of Absalom seems to have satisfied Joab; and he did not afterwards wantonly sacrifice the flying Israelites, but left Such, as to that period had escaped destruction, to seek their homes in safety; calling off his Soldiers from any further pursuit; rightly deeming that the Head of the revolt being laid low, the Body and inferior Members of it would be harmless. The ambition of Absalom, in building a throne by treachery and blood, met with a well-merited fate; and the folly of such vanity as could induce him to rear a column to perpetuate his memory on Earth, instead of endeavouring to get his name Established in the Book of Life, and Written in the Records of Heaven, is recorded for our admonition. How often does the marble column, pointing to the skies, deck the tomb or commemorate the life of him, who never raised his eyes in gratitude to HEAVEN, nor sought that Immortal Crown of Glory, which All who have not, must rue their forfeiture of, throughout a state of endless misery and remorse! Absalom had had three Sons, but all must have died in his lifetime.

It was, probably, the intention of Joab to break the subject of Absalom's death to David by degrees; and withholding written despatches for a time, to be conveyed by Ahimaaz as a distinguished Messenger, to send Cush, an inferior Officer, with the oral intelligence. But Ahimaaz's importunity varied the purpose. In stating generally the Victory to the King, Ahimaaz rightly attributed the Good, which thereby befel David, to the free Gift of GOD; for indeed He is The GOD of Battles, and He alone Giveth the Victory; for with Him are Might, Majesty, and Dominion; for whom He Will He Saveth, and None, either in Earth or in Heaven, can resist the Arm of His Power, or escape the Sword of His Vengeance. The confession would have been more acceptable had it issued from the mouth of David; for, had not The DIVINE Succour been Interposed on his behalf, both he and the Choicest of his Followers might have been extirpated by their sanguinary Enemy; but so weak is the heart of Man, when left to its own influence, so much the Victim and Prey of its own prejudices and passions, that the Mercy of A Heavenly FATHER seems to have been scarcely heeded; and the foolish fondness of an earthly One for the most rebellious of Sons absorbed all other considerations. His first inquiry is for Absalom's fate. The answer he got to it was at first, it might seem, an evasive one, Ahimaaz, doubtless, knowing

his death, but fearing to announce it. The arrival of the second Messenger affirmed the predominant feeling and apprehension of David's mind. Again the fate of Absalom was the first thing inquired after; and the expression of sorrow, when assured of his death, led to the conclusion that all other thoughts were but secondary to it. If the fear that a Child of his own loins might be lost everlastingly, and Condemned for his reprobacy to the Second Death, which is a life of endless woe, pervaded the mind of David, some allowance may in charity be made for him in yielding to so immoderate a grief; for if St. Paul could wish himself accursed from JESUS CHRIST, for his Brethren and his Kinsmen's sake in the flesh, so might David not unreasonably or unnaturally have wished, that the utmost possible temporal calamity might have befallen himself and his cause, as that his Son had been Saved, by a Season for repentance being Extended towards him, from that Spiritual Desolation, which, in the bitterness of anguish, waits the Impenitent in the Life to Come.

"And it was told Joab, 'Behold, the King weepeth and mourneth for Absalom!' And the Victory that day was turned into mourning unto all the People: for the People heard say that day, 'how the King was grieved for his Son!' And the People hid them by stealth that day into the City, as People being ashamed steal away, when they flee in battle. But the King covered his face, and the King cried with a loud voice, 'O my Son Absalom! O Absalom, my Son, my Son!' And Joab came into his house to the King, and said, 'Thou hast shamed this day the faces of all thy servants, which this day have saved thy Life, and the Lives of thy Sons and of thy daughters, and the Lives of thy Wives, and the Lives of thy Concubines: in that thou lovest thine Enemies, and hatest thy Friends: for thou hast declared this day, that thou regardest neither Princes nor Servants: for this day, I perceive, that if Absalom had lived, and all we had died this day, then it had pleased thee well. Now therefore arise, go forth, and speak comfortably unto thy Servants! for I swear by The LORD, if thou go not forth, there will not tarry One with thee this night: and that will be worse unto thee than all the evil, that befel thee from thy youth until now.' Then the King arose, and sat in the gate. And they told unto all the People, saying, 'Behold, the King doth sit in the gate.' And all the People came before the King: for Israel had fled every Man to his tent."—2 Sam. xix, 1 to 8.

Joab had given the wound, that afflicted both David and his People; it was, therefore, his duty to do what could be done towards healing it: and wisely did he set about the work, establishing a character for soundness of judgment, as he had before possessed for military enterprise. The force and justness of his reasoning brought David to a right estimate of character, and drew him from the depth of his cherished sorrow to the contemplation of the Merciful Providence of GOD, and the value of Those, who were Appointed His Instruments of Salvation. The high veneration in which David was held by his Followers, is observable by their readiness, individually, to do him homage, notwithstanding his total disregard of them at the first, even after they had hazarded their Lives in his service.

"And all the People were at strife throughout all the Tribes of Israel, saying, 'The King saved us out of the hand of our Enemies, and he delivered us out of the hand of the Philistines: and now he is fled out of the Land for Absalom: and Absalom, whom we anointed over us, is dead in battle. Now, therefore, why speak ye not a word of bringing the King back?' And King David sent to Zadok and to Abiathar the Priests, saying, 'Speak unto the Elders of Judah, saying, 'Why are ye the Last to bring the King back to his house? seeing the speech of all Israel is true to the King, even to his house. Ye are my Brethren, ye are my bones and my flesh: wherefore then are ye the Last to bring back the King?' And say ye to Amasa, 'Art thou not of my bone and of my flesh? GOD Do so to me and more



*also, if thou be not Captain of the Host before me continually in the room of Joab. And he bowed the heart of all the Men of Judah, even as the heart of one Man; so that they sent this word unto the King, 'Return thou and all thy Servants!'*"—2 Sam. xix, 9 to 14.

How fickle and inconstant is Popular favour, and how weak, therefore, is it as a foundation for the hope of Human happiness! One day Absalom is their idol, another David; but however flattering to our interests the support of a Multitude may be deemed—however gratifying to our pride to be raised as the Object of general admiration, yet it behoves us to consider that the height, to which we may be thereby raised, is a giddy one; and, ere venturing to set our heart upon its attainment, we should remember that pride goes before a fall, and that He, Who is above All, can Use the same Instrument of our elevation to pluck us down and trample us in the dust. Through the Merciful Interposition of PROVIDENCE the Subjects of David, who had arisen in arms, under Absalom's influence, to drive him from his throne, and to persecute him even unto death, are now clamorous for his return, the Tribe to which David belonged being the solitary exception. Still was this exception the occasion of manifesting the nobleness and magnanimity of David. In his victory over the Followers of Absalom, he was more than a Conqueror, having subdued in himself that natural impatience of opposition from a weaker Foe, to which success over a stronger generally gives rise. He might have pressed forward with his victorious Army to Jerusalem, and made the Men of Judah bow in confusion before him, and receive the pardon of their rebellion as an act of condescension and mercy. But David's chiefest aim was to be assured of the Returning Favour of his HEAVENLY KING; and in proof of the value he set upon Its attainment, and of his consciousness that meekness and gentleness are most Acceptable to GOD, he withholds his claims as a Conqueror, and seeks reconciliation by gentle expostulation; offering even to the General of the discomfited Army (as a Member of their Tribe), the highest station in his own. Amasa indeed was near of kin to him, being, as it should seem, a Nephew as the Grandson [c. xvii, v. 25,] of Nahash, which, according to the margin of our Bible, appears to have been but another name for "Jesse," the Father of David. But if the Mother of Amasa was the Daughter of Jesse, so was the Mother of Joab, Abigail and Zeruiah being Sisters; and it seems, therefore, difficult to account for the preference thus given to Amasa, since he was, next to Absalom, the foremost in military hostility against David: whereas Joab had been the constant and successful Asserter and Supporter of David's rights; and, excepting in the instance of his assassination of Abner, and in his massacre of Absalom, had been faithful in every trust reposed in him, hazarding every thing valuable to him for David's interest and honour, equally against foreign and domestic Foes; and, for his sake, in the instance of Uriah, being accessory to the plotted death of a valiant Soldier and an inflexibly loyal Subject. David, doubtless, learnt that his darling Son Absalom might have been preserved to him, but for Joab; this might justify the dismissal of Joab from the high trust he held, owing to the direct infringement of the Royal injunction; but the policy, as well as justice of letting the traitorous Amasa supersede him is fairly open to animadversion. The forbearance and humility of the King seem, however, to have had their just influence on the People of Judah; for on the knees of their hearts, and with the lips of their Souls, did they recall him to his Throne and to his beloved City, inviting, with himself, his Followers, without stipulation or condition.

△ *"So the King returned and came to Jordan. And Judah came to Gilgal to go to meet the King, to conduct the King over Jordan. And Shimei, the Son of Gera, a Benjamite, which was of Bahurim, hasted and came down with the Men*

*Judah to meet King David: and there were a thousand Men of Benjamin with him, and Ziba, the Servant of the House of Saul, and his fifteen Sons, and his many Servants with him; and they went over Jordan before the King. And there was over a ferry boat to carry over the King's Household, and to do what he might good. And Shimei, the Son of Gera, fell down before the King, as he was gone over Jordan; and said unto the King, 'Let not my Lord impute iniquity unto me, neither do thou remember that, which thy Servant did perversely the day, that thou and thy Lord, the King, went out of Jerusalem, that the King should take it to his heart! For thy Servant doth know that I have sinned: therefore, behold, I am come the first of this day of all the House of Joseph to go down to meet my Lord, the King.' And Abishai, the Son of Zeruiah, answered and said, 'Shall not Shimei be put to death for this, because he cursed The LORD'S Anointed?' And David said, 'What have I to do with you, ye Sons of Zeruiah, that ye should this day be Adversaries unto me? Shall there any Man be put to death this day in Israel? for do not I know that I am this day King over Israel?' Therefore the King said unto Shimei, 'Thou shalt not die.' And the King swore unto him."—2 Sam. xix, 15 to 23.*

Judah, though not before Israel in recalling David to his throne, was yet foremost to do him homage as a King, going forth to meet him on his journey, and rendering him, thereby, due honour as a King, and most effectually allaying all doubt in David's mind of the sincerity of their regenerated loyalty. On this occasion no voice of chiding for their ungracious desertion of him was uttered: in the spirit of unmixed Parental affection, he receives his Subjects as Children, and in their honest return to duty he finds full occupation for his generous sentiments. But Judah had only deserted him: Shimei had openly and grossly insulted and traduced him in the moments of his bitterest sorrow and sorest affliction. He too, whether actuated by an abject fear of punishment, or by a consciousness of the wrong he had done and an ingenuous desire to make atonement for it, by its early and public acknowledgment, throws himself upon David's mercy, asking him even to forget that injury, the grossness of which, in the recollection of it, stirs up the spirit of one of David's chiefest Captains to call for instant vengeance on its Perpetrator. But David sought peace and ensued it. His Soul was too generous to withhold pardon, when thus suppliantly sought; and moreover he remembered that Shimei was regarded by him as only an instrument of but too justly-merited Chastisement in the Hands of Him, to Whom alone Vengeance Belongeth. The natural Man and the Spiritual Man were, on this occasion, exemplified in contrast between David and Abishai; the latter, in furtherance of the spirit of rigid and unsparing justice, which is the offspring of pride and self-ignorance, stimulates to the punishment of death, obtruding the offer of himself as the Executioner, probably, as he had before done. But David, who, versed in the Law of his GOD, knew the need in which he himself stood of DIVINE Mercy, in his judgment thought upon mercy, and publicly reproved his blood-thirsty Counsellor, calling him, as in a Spiritual sense he unquestionably was, his Adversary, for suggesting to an act, which, if perpetrated by David, would have been little short of warring against HEAVEN. The Peace of GOD had been Graciously Revisited upon himself, and he knew that it was but his bounden duty to be merciful, as his FATHER, Which was in Heaven, was Merciful. Recalled to that Throne, which he knew was dependant for Support on the Favour of his GOD, he knew, also, that the Kingly Office imposed on him, as the Vicegerent of GOD, the imitation of GOD'S Favourite Attribute of Mercy. How exemplary, therefore, was this conduct of David; and what just discrimination did he shew between good and evil, though the true line of distinction between them was lost sight of in the mind of his Counsellor!

△ *"And Mephibosheth, the Son of Saul, came down to meet the King, and had neither dressed his feet nor trimmed his beard, nor washed his clothes from the day the King departed until the day he came again in peace. And it came to pass, when he was come to Jerusalem to meet the King, that the King said unto him, 'Wherefore wentest not thou with me, Mephibosheth?' And he answered, 'My Lord, O King, my Servant deceived me: for thy Servant said, 'I will saddle me an ass, that I may ride thereon, and go to the King: because thy Servant is lame. And he hath slandered thy Servant unto my Lord, the King: but my Lord, the King, is as an Angel of GOD: do therefore what is good in thine eyes! for all my Father's House were but dead Men before my Lord, the King, yet didst thou set thy Servant among them, that did eat at thine own table. What right, therefore, have I yet to cry any more unto the King?' And the King said unto him, 'Why speakest thou any more of thy matters? I have said, 'Thou and Ziba divide the land!' And Mephibosheth said unto the King, 'Yea, let him take all! forasmuch as my Lord, the King, is come again in peace unto his own house.'"—2 Sam. xix, 24 to 30.*

Though deprived of the body's perfect symmetry, Mephibosheth seems to have possessed the higher and far more estimable beauty of the Soul, and in the essential qualities of the Man to have been a worthy Offspring of his excellent Sire. In the instant he hears of David's expulsion from his Throne, his Soul disdains the idea that adversity should separate him from his noble Friend, and, regardless of the difficulties his lameness might subject him to in a precipitate flight from a furious insurrection, thinks only of testifying his devotion to David by his eagerness to share his fate: the treachery of his confidential Servant frustrates the intention, and his heart is, in consequence, so absorbed in grief, that he becomes entirely negligent of his Person, and refuses to be comforted, whilst he apprehends his beloved Master is in suffering. With that Master's return, joy returns to Mephibosheth's bosom, and he hastens to testify his continuing veneration for him. At his first interview with David, his thoughts are engrossed by the joy of David's presence; he approaches him with no other feeling; and notwithstanding the injustice done him by Ziba, does not originate a complaint against him. But when David expressly questions the sincerity of his professed attachment, he is driven to that vindication of himself, which truth required; and after stating the fact as it was, leaves, with the confidence that uprightness imparts, his cause to the discerning judgment of the King; to whose bounty he gratefully acknowledges both his life and fortune were owing. And when the proffer of restitution is made to Mephibosheth, though confined to half of his estates, so far is he from being dissatisfied therewith, he willingly relinquishes all, contenting himself with the riches that flowed to his susceptible and amiable heart from the return of his Monarch in peace, and his restoration to that Monarch's favour. But David's judgment seems, in this instance, to have been hasty and unjust. Ziba's guilt and treachery towards his Master, and his hypocrisy and deception towards David, should have been sifted and exposed, and his pardon and support should have been left to the free workings of Mephibosheth's mind.

△ *"And Barzillai, the Gileadite, came down from Rogelim, and went over Jordan with the King, to conduct him over Jordan. Now Barzillai was a very aged Man, even fourscore years old: and he had provided the King of sustenance, while he lay at Mahanaim; for he was a very great Man. And the King said unto Barzillai, 'Come thou over with me! and I will feed thee with me in Jerusalem.' And Barzillai said unto the King, 'How long have I to live, that I should go up with the King unto Jerusalem? I am this day fourscore years old: and can I discern between good and evil? can thy Servant taste what I eat, or what I drink? can I hear any more the voice of singing Men, and singing Women? Wherefore*

*should thy Servant be yet a burden unto my Lord, the King? Thy Servant will go a little way over Jordan with the King; and why should the King recompense it me with such a reward? Let thy Servant, I pray thee, turn back again, that may die in mine own City, and be buried by the grave of my Father and of my Mother. But behold thy Servant Chimham; let him go over with my Lord, the King: and do to him what shall seem good unto thee!*" And the King answered, *Chimham shall go over with me, and I will do to him that which shall seem good unto me; and whatsoever thou shalt require of me, that will I do for thee!*" And all the People went over Jordan. And when the King was come over, the King kissed Barzillai, and blessed him: and he returned unto his own Place. Then the King went on to Gilgal, and Chimham went on with him."—2 Sam. xix, 31 to half of 40.

This is an interesting scene and equally honourable to the character and feelings of David. Amidst the prospect of returning power, and amidst the natural eagerness to advance to his beloved Jerusalem, the seat of Majesty, David, to mindful of the kindnesses he had received from Barzillai, when he so greatly stood in need of them, accommodates himself to Barzillai's far advanced age, and consequent infirmities, and is anxious to shew him honour amidst the splendour of his recovered Court. Barzillai, conscious of the vanity and unsatisfactoriness of worldly honours, thinks only of doing his duty by his King, and then of laying his head on the pillow of death in peace; seeking, in all the vigour of filial affection, though at fourscore years of age, to have his bones entombed with his rents, rather than be sepulchred amongst the monuments of Royalty; and his act of filial piety, as well as his unshaken loyalty, have found their record in the Book of Life. The homage paid him by his King in the parting embrace of benediction, and his adoption of the Son of Barzillai virtually as his own child, must have shed a joy over the old Man's heart, and have lit up in his soul irradiating gladness amidst the closing day of Animal sense. The representation of Human infirmity, at the extended age of Human Kind, is affectingly and faithfully given.

"And all the People of Judah conducted the King, and also Half the People of Israel. And, Behold, all the Men of Israel came to the King, and said unto the King, 'Why have our Brethren, the Men of Judah, stolen thee away, and have sought the King and his Household and all David's Men with him, over Jordan?' And all the Men of Judah answered the Men of Israel, 'Because the King is Near Kin to us: wherefore then be ye angry for this matter? Have we eaten at all of the King's cost? or hath he given us any gift?' And the Men of Israel answered the Men of Judah, and said, 'We have ten parts in the King, and we have also been right in David than ye: why then did ye despise us, that our advice should not first had in bringing back our King?' And the words of the Men of Judah were stronger than the words of the Men of Israel. And there happened to be there a Man Belial, whose name was Sheba, the Son of Bichri, a Benjamite; and he blew a trumpet, and said, 'We have no part in David, neither have we inheritance in the Kingdom of Jesse: every Man to his tents, O Israel!' So every Man of Israel went up after David, and followed Sheba, the Son of Bichri: but the Men of Judah were unto their King, from Jordan even to Jerusalem."—2 Sam. xix, half of 40 to xx, 1, 2.

Though late in the manifestation of their zeal for their Kinsman and King, yet were the Men of Judah faithful to their pledge of devotion and loyalty to him, when made: and most disinterested seems to have been their conduct on the occasion of bringing back David to his Government, and most careful were they not to give just occasion of jealousy to their Brethren and Fellow-Subjects, the People of Israel. But jealousy is a sadly stirring spirit, and seeketh occasion of offence, where none was intended. An honourable competition in

loyal attentions to the King, amongst the different Tribes of his People, perfectly compatible with mutual harmony and good will; and had this disposition of loyalty pervaded All in proportion to their professions, the union with temperate zeal would have been witnessed here; but the heart of the of Israel was not warm in the cause, and, though foremost to proffer ~~ser~~ they were the first to withdraw it; and no sooner does even a Son of B One notoriously abandoned to sensuality and profligacy, set the Israelites example of desertion, than it is eagerly and ungenerously followed by TI who, in numberless instances perhaps, owed their very lives to the forbear and clemency of David; but so fleeting is the breath of Popular applause, ar varying the wind of Popular opinion.

*"And David came to his house at Jerusalem. And the King took th Women, his Concubines, whom he had left to keep the house, and put them in u and fed them, but went not in unto them. So they were shut up unto the d their death, living in widowhood."*—2 Sam. xx, 3.

The indignity offered to David, in the face of all Israel, by Absalom's nection with these Women, led to this determination; but as David knew were the passive Engines of DIVINE Chastisement on his own offence of in tinency and cruelty in the affair of Bathsheba and Uriah, he did not sul them to the punishment of death; neither did he abandon them to penur prostitution, but kept them on the fruits of his Royal bounty, and prece them in that state of separation from Man, and from the intoxicating pleasur this life, which might afford them the most favourable opportunity of wea their affections from the things of Earth to those of Heaven, and influence t to make their peace with GOD, and cherish a fondness and preference for t Things, which pertain unto The SPIRIT and to the Life to Come.

△ *"Then said the King to Amasa, 'Assemble me the Men of Judah within 1 days, and be thou here present!' So Amasa went to assemble the Men of Ju but he tarried longer than the set time, which he had appointed him. And D said to Abishai, 'Now shall Sheba, the Son of Bichri, do us more harm, than Absalom: take thou thy Lord's Servants, and pursue after him! lest he get fenced Cities, and escape us.' And there went out after him Joab's Men, ana Cherethites, and the Pelethites, and all the mighty Men: and they went on Jerusalem to pursue after Sheba, the Son of Bichri. When they were at the s stone, which is in Gibeon, Amasa went before them. And Joab's garment, th had put on, was girded unto him, and upon it a girdle with a sword fastened 1 his loins in the sheath thereof: and as he went forth it fell out. And Joab sai Amasa, 'Art thou in health, my Brother?' And Joab took Amasa by the b with the right hand to kiss him. But Amasa took no heed to the sword, that in Joab's hand: so he smote him therewith in the fifth rib, and shed out his b to the ground, and struck him not again; and he died. So Joab, and Abishai Brother, pursued after Sheba, the Son of Bichri. And One of Joab's Men stoo him, and said, 'He that favoureth Joab, and he that is for David, let him go 1 Joab.' And Amasa wallowed in blood in the midst of the highway. And when Man saw that all the People stood still, he removed Amasa out of the highway the field, and cast a cloth upon him, when he saw that every One, that came by, stood still. When he was removed out of the highway, all the People went on 1 Joab, to pursue after Sheba, the Son of Bichri. And he went through all the T of Israel unto Abel, and to Beth-maachah, and all the Berites; and they gathered together, and went also after him. And they came and besieged hi Abel of Beth-maachah, and they cast up a bank against the City, and it stood i trench: and all the People, that were with Joab, battered the wall, to throw it d Then cried a wise Woman out of the City: 'Hear! hear! Say, I pray you,*

*Joab. 'Come near hither, that I may speak with thee!' And when he was come near unto her, the Woman said, 'Art thou Joab?' And he answered, 'I am he.' Then she said unto him, 'Hear the words of thine Handmaid!' And he answered, 'I do hear.' Then she spake, saying, 'They were wont to speak in old time, saying, They shall surely ask counsel at Abel: and so they ended the matter.' 'I am One of them, that are peaceable and faithful in Israel: thou seekest to destroy a City, and a Mother in Israel: why wilt thou swallow up the Inheritance of The LORD?' And Joab answered and said, 'Far be it, far be it from me, that I should swallow up or destroy! The matter is not so; but a Man of Mount Ephraim, Sheba, the Son of Bichri by name, hath lifted up his hand against the King, even against David: deliver him only! and I will depart from the City.' And the Woman said unto Joab, 'Behold, his head shall be thrown to thee over the wall.' Then the Woman went unto all the People in her wisdom. And they cut off the head of Sheba, the Son of Bichri, and cast it out to Joab. And he blew a trumpet, and they retired from the City, every Man to his tent. And Joab returned to Jerusalem unto the King."—2 Sam. xx, 4 to 22.*


David, having pledged his word, that Amasa should be the chief Captain of his Host, kept it; but finding him less active than he had expected, or being distrustful of his loyalty, and the suppression of Sheba's rebellion being considered by him an act of the most urgent necessity, Abishai is also sent forward for the purpose; David's confidence being seemingly withdrawn from Joab, his former Captain, the badge or symbol of his authority as Commander-in-chief having been transferred to Amasa. Amasa's loyalty, however, if distrusted, was so without reason, for he overtook the expedition and headed it; but alas! only to afford one other instance of the uncertainty of Human power and honours, and to exemplify the dangers to which exalted stations are exposed from the shafts that Envy or Malice hurl at them. Joab, though deposed from the supreme command, and willingly submitting to the supercession of himself by his own Brother, could not brook the superiority of Amasa; the malignant passion of jealousy, and its cruel offspring revenge, he fostered secretly in his bosom: to Amasa himself, he bore welcome on the eye, the lip, the tongue, but was the Serpent under it; and like another Judas betrayed his Master with a kiss; and Amasa, in the unsuspectingness of his heart, became the Victim of such deep-played villany. The act, as well it might, struck horror through the Army, and paralyzed for a time its movements; but the power and influence of Joab were too deeply-rooted for the call of recriminative justice to be made, even by the immediate Followers of the treacherously-murdered Amasa; who, indeed, thus dearly compensated the treachery he had formerly used towards David. Even the common lot of Humanity, a grave, seems to have been withheld from him, and the birds of the air were left to share with the worms of the earth his body as their prey. How are the Mighty fallen! but how infinitely preferable is death with all such ignominy, than life with such a hell-engendered and hell-propelling Spirit as Joab's; and how just is the admonition—"Fear not them, that kill the body, and then have nothing more that they can do; but fear Him, Who can Cast both body and Soul into Hell, where their worm dieth not and their fire is not quenched!" Let our prayer, therefore, be, "Save us, O GOD, from all spiritual evil, and, especially, Save us from ourselves, and the power and prevalence of the evil passions within us!"

Salvation is of The LORD, and often is His Power Manifested by the weak Instruments of His Choice in the Exercise of It. The infuriated and sanguinary Joab is stopt in his career of war and desolation by a Woman, the fortitude and prudence of whose mind form a more effectual barrier for her City's safety than the walls and bulwarks, that surrounded it. Ignorant perhaps of the motive,

that brought an hostile Army before the Place of her affection and the abode of her Kindred, she determines to ascertain the cause, that a remedy, if possible, might be applied to avert the threatened danger; she boldly seeks the knowledge at the fountain, though at the hazard of meeting with Personal insult; and in all the prudence of judgment, first awakens in the hostile General's mind (with whom she heroically demands a parley,) the recollection of the reverence in which, from the character of its People's wisdom, the Place he was besieging, had been held by all the People of Israel; and having thus excited a filial feeling on the part of Joab towards it, she then presents her own character and condition to his consideration, "*I am One of them, that are peaceable and faithful in Israel. Thou seekest to destroy a City and a Mother in Israel:*" the dignity of her deportment, the probable sweetness of her voice, to which the consciousness of the importance attached to the success of her effort for the general safety, must have given peculiar impressiveness, whether heightened or not by personal beauty, must doubtless have penetrated the heart of Joab, as his uninterrupted hearing of her manifested; but strong as were a Mother's feelings for her Offspring's safety, yet did she reserve, as the last and most powerful argument to avert the sword that she saw unsheathed for the work of general desolation of the City, the fact that "*The LORD GOD JEHOVAH had an Inheritance within it:*" that the Souls of the Faithful throughout all the Tribes of Israel are His, and that the seeking their destruction would be warring against HEAVEN. "*Why wilt thou swallow up the Inheritance of The LORD?*" The conquering Joab was, by this just reasoning, overcome; and, acknowledging that Sheba alone was the object of his hostility, and that, for his royal Master David's sake, the destruction of Sheba was required, he leaves the City in peace on obtaining its accomplishment through this Woman's counsel: thus is wisdom justified of all her Children, and a Woman's influence, directed by it, is as resistless as the cannon's force.

"*Now Joab was over all the Host of Israel: and Benaiah, the Son of Jehoiada, was over the Cherethites and over the Pelethites: and Adoram was over the Tribute: and Jehoshaphat, the Son of Ahilud, was Recorder: and Sheva was Scribe: and Zadok and Abiathar were the Priests: and Ira also, the Jairite, was a chief Rule about David.*"—2 Sam. xx, 23 to 26.

That David was made acquainted with the murder of Amasa by Joab, as he was of the slaughter of Absalom by Joab, can hardly be doubted: that so foul an offence, superadded to the assassination of Abner and his destruction of Absalom, must have made Joab more hateful in the eyes of David, is scarcely to be questioned; and why, under such an aggravating accumulation of guilt, Joab should have been continued in power it is difficult to explain. David should have called him to judgment, and not have let either power or wealth have proved a screen from the sword of the Law. But David's employment of Joab in a work of blood, by compassing the death of Uriah, left him without the free exercise of that talent and inclination which were generally in him to judge righteous judgment. The Pander of our base passions, though for however short an indulgence of them, will ever be a prey upon our patience and a restraint on our conduct—we are ever in his power: how unwise, therefore, is it for a mere momentary gratification to surrender our conscience and its liberties to Another. In the corresponding passage, where the names and stations of the chief Men about David are mentioned, ch. viii, 15 to 18, it is said, by way of preface, v. 15, "*David executed judgment and justice unto all his People.*" To a mind disposed so to act, how galling must have been the chain of his own forging that bound him, from so doing, in the instance of Joab. With the substitution of Sheva for Seraiah, as the Scribe, and the addition of Adoram as Receiver General or Treasurer, and Ira, of the town of Jair probably, as called a Jairite, the Persons are the same as stated in chapter viii.

"Then there was a famine in the days of David three years, year after year :  and David inquired of The LORD. And The LORD Answered, 'It is for Saul and for his bloody House; because he slew the Gibeonites.' And the King called the Gibeonites, and said unto them; (now the Gibeonites were not of the Children of Israel, but of the Remnant of the Amorites; and the Children of Israel had sworn unto them; and Saul sought to slay them in his zeal to the Children of Israel and Judah.) Wherefore David said unto the Gibeonites, 'What shall I do for you? and wherewith shall I make the atonement; that ye may bless the Inheritance of The LORD?' And the Gibeonites said unto him, 'We will have no silver nor gold of Saul, nor of his House; neither for us shalt thou kill any Man in Israel.' And he said, 'What ye shall say, that will I do for you.' And they answered the King, 'The Man, that consumed us, and that devised against us, that we should be destroyed from remaining in any of the Coasts of Israel, let seven Men of his Sons be delivered unto us; and we will hang them up unto The LORD in Gibeah of Saul, whom The LORD did Choose.' And the King said, 'I will give them.' But the King spared Mephibosheth, the Son of Jonathan, the Son of Saul, because of The LORD'S Oath that was between them, between David and Jonathan, the Son of Saul. But the King took the two Sons of Rizpah, the Daughter of Aiah, whom she bare unto Saul, Armoni and Mephibosheth, and the five Sons of Michal, the Daughter of Saul, whom she brought up for Adriel, the Son of Barzillai, the Meholahite: and he delivered them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they hanged them in the Hill before The LORD: and they fell all Seven together, and were put to death in the days of harvest, in the first days, in the beginning of barley harvest. And Rizpah, the Daughter of Aiah, took sackcloth and spread it for her upon the rock, from the beginning of harvest until water dropped upon them out of Heaven, and suffered neither the birds of the air to rest on them by day, nor the beast of the field by night. And it was told David, what Rizpah, the Daughter of Aiah, the Concubine of Saul had done. And David went and took the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan, his Son, from the Men of Jabesh-Gilead, which had stolen them from the street of Beth-shan, where the Philistines had hanged them, when the Philistines had slain Saul in Gilboa: and he brought up from thence the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan, his Son; and they gathered the bones of them that were hanged. And the bones of Saul and Jonathan, his Son, buried they in the Country of Benjamin in Zelah, in the sepulchre of Kish, his Father: and they performed all that the King commanded. And after that GOD was Intreated for the Land."—2 Sam. xxi, 1 to 14.

War, Pestilence, and Famine are the Manifestations of The DIVINE Displeasure towards his offending Creatures, and though apparently natural causes, and productive of only natural effects, are, to the eye of Faith, the Visitations of DIVINE Chastisements. But they are Chastisements Flowing from the FOUNTAIN of Mercy, that though the Body may well-nigh perish, the Soul, by its contrition and sorrow for its offences, may live in Everlasting Peace, where there is no more sickness, or pain, or trouble; and where *that* Bread is Administered which filleth the hungry Soul with plenteousness, and satisfieth the empty Soul with gladness. Thus is it that in looking to the ends of all DIVINE Judgments, whether National or Individual, we shall perceive Them Tending either to the conversion of the present, or the admonition of the future Ages of Mankind; and we are thereby enabled to reconcile with DIVINE Justice and Goodness, the Suspension of the Infliction of the Fulness of Its Anger, till the cup of iniquity overflows, and The DIVINE Forbearance is necessarily Exhausted. It is true, The LORD does sometimes Visit the sins of Fathers upon the Children; but this is, because, with all the Admonitions that the Fathers had, and with their example before them, the sins of the Children have worn yet a deeper dye;



or, if it be otherwise, then, as there is no Man, that liveth, and sinneth not, temporal Punishment is a Merciful Substitution for Eternal, as All, in the Judgment to Come, will acknowledge. The Ways of PROVIDENCE are, indeed, sometimes Inscrutable to minds so contracted as Mankind's; but there is no greater or more consolatory Truth than that Those Ways shall All ultimately be Justified to All, and will be found to Tend to Universal Good.

Famine, though followed by its almost inseparable attendant Pestilence, is an indisputable good, if, in bowing the Body to the ground, it bow the Spirit in penitence to its MAKER; and this is the salutary use to which all National calamity should be turned; and then who would murmur at The DIVINE Dispersations? The sacredness of an oath pledged for the Salvation of the Gibeonites, being alike binding on King and People, should have been observed by All; and the People, when called upon by their King to violate it, should have protested against the impiety as well as treachery and cruelty of the act, and have invoked, by public prayer, The KING of Kings to turn the heart of their Earthly Ruler from so unwarrantable a purpose, or to save them from being the Instruments of its perpetration. But this was not done; and both Saul and his People opened the sluices and let go the floods of desolation upon the unsuspecting Gibeonites. For such an offence as this, should not The LORD, Who Judgeth right, Visit? Shall He, Who Knoweth them that are His, and to Whom Vengeance Belongeth, not Avenge their cause? But why, it is perhaps asked, not Pour instant Destruction on the heads of the Offenders? and why Reserve, almost to another Generation, the Infliction of the Punishment such iniquity was declared to deserve? Individual punishment had been Inflicted on Saul, the great Instigator of this wickedness, for the evil Spirit was continually haunting him—the Enemies of his peace had overcome him—his beloved Son fell slaughtered in his view—and himself, the prey of false pride, rushed upon death to save him from its influence; temporal chastisement, therefore, was upon him; and, after death, That Judgment, Which it is terrible to contemplate, if he died with his sins unrepented of. The principal Instruments of his fell purpose towards the Gibeonites had, probably, shared the reverses of his fortunes—his own Children were reduced from the splendour of Royalty to the rank of comparative insignificance—the People of the Land, from the prevalence of civil or of foreign war, had scarcely known a season of rest; but yet the lesson of humility had not been profited by; and the superadded Chastisement of Famine was, by The DIVINE Councils, Judged necessary to justify the Ways of GOD to Man. But why, it is, perhaps, again asked, were the Sons of Saul so signally made the sacrifices for a Nation's sins, when it does not appear that they were individually more guilty than Others; and can The GOD of Mercy have Pleasure in the shedding of Human blood? The Gibeonites had been cruelly used, and the *bloody House* of Saul is declared to have been the cause of it. Some of these Sons might have been Instruments, in a prominent degree, and the too willing Instruments, of their Father's violence towards the Gibeonites; if so, they were rightly cut off in their generation; and it was, perhaps, for the general peace of Israel that these Disturbers of it were removed out of the way. If they were innocent of the great offence, they were but taken from the evil to come, and transplanted into Regions of perfect Bliss, where that Peace, which passeth understanding, continually pervades and rejoices the Soul. In all our considerations of such subjects, we should take with us that the Fulness of The HOLY GHOST was not, in that day, Shed upon the hearts of Men, and that Its meek and lovely Graces of patience, long-suffering, kindness, Brotherly love, and charity were not fully understood; for The Great PATTERN of them, the Spiritual DAVID, had not Appeared. Blood for blood was then the Jewish axiom, and out of their

north the Gibeonites judged and condemned the People of Israel. David, the distressed of his Country, and consulting the Priests, as the supposed of his GOD, acted upon their suggestions, and, finding the unsatisfied voice of the Gibeonites was to be appeased, unqualifiedly pledged himself to performance; for the faithful fulfilment of which pledge the death of Others was necessary: it is hard to sit in judgment on such matters: the purer of Christianity, since then Manifested in the Flesh, and Enrobed in That which now Lighteth every Man, that cometh into the World, would, as a patient submission, even to the agonizing and destructive ravages of, rather than to seek to avert The DIVINE Chastisement by Another's and, though much may appear to extenuate this further offence of David (which it should seem to be), nothing could palliate the commission of its like as our day of Spiritual Knowledge and more perfect Revelation of the of the Mercies of GOD.

in the selection of Objects to be the destined Victims of the Gibeonites' vengeance, David seems to have used some discrimination,—one Mephibosheth spared for the sake of his Father Jonathan, as well, probably, as for his own sake, though these would have better fitted him for bowing the life of the to its native dust, and entering upon the Spiritual Life, which cometh after that which he had preferred before it. Michal, it is true, was the Wife of David, but after their marriage, Saul, her Father, had taken her from the house of David, and given her in marriage to Phalti, the Son of Laish, which was of David (1 Sam. xxv. 44), by whom, it is not improbable, she had Issue; (for in a recent part of Michal's history, we find that barrenness was visited upon her as a contemptuous treatment of David, when engaged in the service of his Father,) and this Issue might have been that destined, as descendants of Saul, to destruction. But the margin of our Bible reads, "the five Sons of Michal's"; and as Saul had another Daughter, whose name was Merab (who, of course, was Michal's Sister, and who, though originally betrothed to David, as a reward of his victories over the Philistines, was treacherously given by Saul in marriage to Adriel, the Meholathite—1 Sam. xviii, 19), the Issue of that Daughter might equally have been the Victims on the occasion; and this seems more probable, as Adriel is named as the Person, for whom the five Sons were brought up, and Michal is expressly said to have been *Childless to the day of her death*.—2 Sam. vi. 23.

It is impossible, in reading this history, not to share in the sorrows of David, when contemplating her Motherly tenderness and devotion: there is so much of the Heroine in her conduct, and it exhibits so exalted a character of devotion, as far as temporal considerations extend, that we cannot but admire it. To the Spiritually-minded, how much more gratifying would it have been to have had it recorded of Rizpah that, however deep was her lamentation for the loss of, perhaps, her only Children, thus torn from her bosom and slaughtered before her face, leaving her doubly disconsolate as Childless and a Widow, yet she had been the Parental energies she had instanced before their death to realize their affections, that she had succeeded in giving such a pious education to their minds, as to make them, under circumstances so ignominious, content to resign the Life that is, in the holy hope of That which is to come, to look forward with the assurance of a Spiritual faith in the expectation though separated for a time from a natural Mother's fondness, they should be moved to that infinitely more Exalted Sphere of Parental Love and filial piety, the Bosom of their FATHER Which is in Heaven. How would their hearts have been soothed and her troubles been calmed, had she taught them to have faith in the holy Job's faith, "Though worms (or birds or beasts) may destroy my body, yet in our flesh shall we see GOD."

The conduct of Rizpah probably influenced David to give to her Child the honours of a Royal burial, and thus, in some degree, to appease the anger of her mind; and the general prosperity, though produced at her expense, may in time, have hushed her sorrows to rest: well may it have been for her, if the sorrows led her to seek refuge in her GOD! for this is the Object of DIVINELY Permitted Chastisements; and may be their end; an end, well assuredly bringeth peace, and openeth the way to that State, where sorrow and mourning are no more.

The sacrifice required by the Gibeonites being made, and the minds of Gibeonites thereby reconciled to a free communion with the Israelites; and Israelites being taught, and profitably taught, humility towards their GOD, prayer is offered up to Him, Whose Providence Ruleth over all the Kingdom of the Earth, Who feedeth even the young ravens that cry unto Him, and with Whom not a hair of our head perisheth; and that prayer, which is for peace and for peace, is Heard, and (as is inferable) was Granted by the Famine ceased to rage, and the Pestilence, which naturally followed it, being stayed.

△ *"Moreover, the Philistines had yet war again with Israel: and David went down and his Servants with him, and fought against the Philistines: and David waxed faint. And Ishbi-benob, which was of the Sons of the Giant, the weight whose spear weighed three hundred shekels of brass in weight, he being girded with a new sword, thought to have slain David: but Abishai, the Son of Zeruiah, succoured him, and smote the Philistine, and killed him. Then the Men of David swore to him, saying, 'Thou shalt go no more out with us to battle, that thou quench not light of Israel!' And it came to pass after this, that there was again a battle with the Philistines at Gob: then Sibbechai, the Hushathite, slew Saph, which was of Sons of the Giant. And there was again a battle in Gob with the Philistines, where Elhanan, the Son of Jaare-oregim, a Beth-lehemite, slew the Brother of Goliath, Gittite, the staff of whose spear was like a Weaver's beam. And there was yet battle in Gath, where was a Man of great stature, that had on every hand six fingers and on every foot six toes, four and twenty in number; and he also was born to Giant: and when he defied Israel, Jonathan, the Son of Shimea, the Brother of David, slew him. These Four were born to the Giant in Gath; and fell by the hand of David and by the hand of his Servants."—2 Sam. xxi, 15 to 22.*

The account given in the Book of Chronicles is—

*"And it came to pass after this, that there arose war at Gezer with the Philistines: at which time Sibbechai, the Hushathite, slew Sippai, that was of the Child of the Giant: and they were subdued. And there was war again with the Philistines; and Elhanan, the Son of Jair, slew Lahmi, the Brother of Goliath, Gittite, whose spear-staff was like a Weaver's beam. And yet again there was a battle at Gath, where was a Man of great stature, whose fingers and toes were four and twenty, six on each hand, and six on each foot: and he also was the Son of Giant. But when he defied Israel, Jonathan, the Son of Shimea, David's Brother, slew him. These were born unto the Giant in Gath: and they fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his Servants."—1 Chron. xx, 4 to 8.*

The evil of Famine in the Land of Israel having subsided, and during prevalence, the Israelites having been spared the further Chastisement of War notwithstanding the contiguity of the Philistines, so hostile to and jealous of them, and that too at a time when invasion might have seemed most likely have been attended with success against a People borne down with want and enervated by sickness (but thus is it that The LORD of Hosts, The GOD of Power and Wisdom, Blindeth the Violent and Ambitious, and Bringeth nought the counsels of the Wicked), David, finding the spirit of the Philistine now ripe for battle with him, prepareth for the conflict, and in the fight becomes himself conspicuously prominent where valour pointed the way, became at length

pent with exertion, and unable longer to sustain his part; in this instant a tremendous arm, with a Giant's strength, was raised to crush him, but The LORD Left not His Chosen Unprotected, for in the same instant, his gallant General, Abishai, faithful to his trust, and fighting by his Master's side, flew like a lion on his prey, and felled Philistia's boasted Champion to the ground.

The peril to which David had been exposed, at a time of life when the rigour of Manhood must have been declining (for it seems probable that David was now about 70 years old), impelled the Israelites with one voice to protest against his further exposure of himself to Personal efforts and dangers so unsuited to his age; but with what filial affection and delicacy of sentiment was this application made to him. "*Thou shalt go no more out with us to battle, that thou quench not the light of Israel!*" feeble though we consider you in body, yet in mental vigour and in Spiritual power, we look up to you as the Sun of our political sphere, reflecting the Rays of DIVINE Light upon us, as derived from The FOUNTAIN of Light. It is true that GOD might have Continued to have Given Protection to His Beloved, and to have Nerved his enfeebled arm with strength for the battle; but by seemingly Natural means His Gracious Ways of Providence are most usually Effected, and such Means He Found to Give Salvation unto David and His People; for in three succeeding wars with the same relentless and powerful Enemy, Protection was Given unto the Israelites, notwithstanding David did not Personally go forth with them to battle: though it is probable that his counsel may have planned the operations of the campaign, and thus virtually have led the way to victory. In the general history of David but little appears of his Brothers: in this part of the Narrative the Son of One of them, faithful to his Uncle's honour and his Country's cause, displays prodigies of valour, and, like a second David, jealous for the honour of his GOD, slew another Goliath, an uncircumcised Philistine, who dared to defy the Armies of The Living GOD.

At length peace abroad and plenty at home prevailing, David, knowing from Whom Come all Good Gifts, temporal as well as Spiritual, gives his mind to pious composition.

*"And David spake unto The LORD the words of this Song in the day that The LORD had Delivered him out of the hand of all his Enemies, and out of the hand of Saul: and he said, 'THE LORD is my ROCK and my FORTRESS, and my DELIVERER, The GOD of my ROCK: in Him will I trust: He is my SHIELD, and the HORN of my Salvation, my HIGH TOWER and my REFUGE, my SAVIOUR! THOU Savest me from violence: I will call on The LORD, Who is Worthy to be praised: so shall I be Saved from mine Enemies. When the waves of death compassed me, the floods of ungodly Men made me afraid: the sorrows of Hell compassed me about; the snares of Death prevented me; in my distress I called upon The LORD, and cried to my GOD; and He did Hear my voice out of His Temple, and my cry did enter into His Ears. Then the Earth shook and trembled: the Foundations of Heaven moved and shook, because He was Wroth: There went up a Smoke out of His Nostrils; and fire out of His Mouth devoured: coals were kindled by it. HE Bowed the Heavens also, and Came down; and Darkness was under His Feet: and He Rode upon a Cherub, and did Fly: and He was seen upon the wings of the Wind: and He Made Darkness Pavilions round about Him, dark Waters, and thick Clouds of the Skies: through the Brightness before Him were coals of fire kindled. THE LORD Thundered from Heaven, and The MOST HIGH Uttered His Voice: and He Sent out Arrows, and Scattered them; Lightning, and Discomfited them; and the channels of the Sea appeared, the foundations of the World were discovered, at the Rebuking of The LORD, at the Blast of the Breath of His Nostrils. HE Sent from Above, He Took me; He Drew me out of many waters; He Delivered me from my strong Enemy, and from*

them that hated me; for they were too strong for me: they prevented me in the day of my calamity. But The LORD was my Stay: He Brought me forth also into a large Place; He Delivered me, because He Delighted in me. THE LORD Rewarded me according to my righteousness: according to the cleanness of my hands hath He Recomposed me: for I have kept the Ways of The LORD, and have not wickedly departed from my GOD. For all His Judgments were before me; and as for His Statutes, I did not depart from Them. I was also upright before Him, and have kept myself from mine iniquity. Therefore The LORD hath Recomposed me according to my righteousness; according to my cleanness in His Eye-Sight. With the Merciful Thou wilt Shew Thy-Self Merciful, and with the upright Man Thou wilt Shew Thy-Self Upright. With the Pure Thou wilt Shew Thy-Self Pure; and with the Froward Thou wilt Shew Thy-Self Unsavoury: and the afflicted People Thou wilt Save. But thine Eyes are upon the Haughty, that Thou mayest Bring them down. For Thou art my Lamp, O LORD; (and The LORD will Lighten my darkness:) for by Thee I have run through a Troop: by my GOD have I leaped over a wall. As for GOD, His Way is Perfect: the Word of The LORD is tried: He is a BUCKLER to all them, that trust in Him. For Who is GOD, save The LORD? and Who is a ROCK, save our GOD? GOD is my Strength and Power: and He Maketh my way perfect. HE Maketh my feet like hind's feet, and Setteth me upon my high Places: He Teacheth my hands to war; so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms. THOU hast also Given me the Shield of Thy Salvation: and Thy Gentleness hath Made me Great. THOU hast Enlarged my steps under me, so that my feet did not slip: I have pursued mine Enemies, and destroyed them; and turned not again until I had consumed them: and I have consumed them, and wounded them, that they could not arise; yea, they are fallen under my feet: for Thou hast Girded me with Strength to battle: Them, that rose up against me, hast Thou Subdued under me: Thou hast also Given me the necks of mine Enemies, that I might destroy Them, that hate me. They looked, but there was None to save; even unto The LORD, but He Answered them not: then did I beat them as small as the dust of the Earth: I did stamp them as the mire of the Street, and did spread them abroad. THOU also hast Delivered me from the strivings of my People: Thou hast Kept me to be Head of the Heathen: a People, which I knew not, shall serve me: Strangers shall submit themselves unto me: as soon as they hear, they shall be obedient unto me. Strangers shall fade away, and they shall be afraid out of their close Places. THE LORD Liveth; and Blessed be my ROCK! and Exalted be The GOD of the Rock of my Salvation! It is GOD, That Avengeth me, and That Bringeth down the People under me; and That Bringeth me forth from mine Enemies. THOU also hast Lifted me up on High, above Them that rose up against me: Thou hast Delivered me from the violent Man. Therefore I will give thanks unto Thee, O LORD, among the Heathen, and I will sing praises unto Thy Name. HE is The TOWER of Salvation for His King; and Sheweth Mercy to His Anointed, unto David, and to His Seed for evermore.'—2 Sam. xxii.

How acceptable a display have we here of all the beauty and vigour of poetical composition, dedicated to The True SOURCE of them, The FATHER of Lights and The FOUNTAIN of Wisdom! What an interesting exhibition of that faith, which worketh by humility and reverence and love towards The CREATOR of all Things and The PRESERVER of all Men! A King and a Conqueror; a Man, whose wisdom ruled a People in righteousness, and whose valour struck terror into the hearts of all his Enemies, is here seen, bending on the knees of his heart, and acknowledging that his Sufficiency was only from GOD! The whole Psalm abounds with the loftiest sentiments of piety and the most holy raptures of praise; it exhibits equal beauty and holiness with the

amirable Song of Moses on the Deliverance of Israel from the Egyptians Ex. xv): and the sudden changes of Person, that are conspicuous in it throughout, mark it as an extemporaneous production, and bear the stronger testimony to its speaking the language of David's heart. Triumphant over all his Enemies, both abroad and at home, he acknowledges, with equal dignity of utterance and earnestness of conception, that his Victory was of The LORD; and that He Alone brought Salvation. Not only for past Deliverances does David magnify his GOD, but at a time of the *highest prosperity*, he equally relies on Him for *present* Protection and *future* Support; well knowing that no Human state in any period if it can give security, whether of temporal or Spiritual good, unless GOD be The GUARANTEE of it. In the Song under consideration (and which has been embodied principally into the xviii Psalm, but parts of it have also been thrown into other psalms), David, after breaking forth in a noble confession of the Power and Providence of GOD, looks back upon the chequered scene of his own Life, and on the multitude of perils that assailed him, and from which The LORD had Set him free, recollecting that in all his calamities he had made The LORD his Confidence; and, seeking Succour from Him, had not been disappointed, he now exultingly proclaims as much. What important admonition and what salutary consolation for the Children of affliction does this sentence, the confession of so great and good a Man, as David, contain, "*In my distress I called upon The LORD, and cried to my GOD; and He did Hear my voice out of His Temple, and my cry did enter into His Ears!*" Then, in all the loftiness of poetic sentiment, sublimed by the purest feelings of devotion, the holy Bard imagines, as far as Human conception can do, the Manifestation of The DIVINE PRESENCE upon the Earth: Such as indeed might seem more applicable to the Last Day of this World's Life, when The LORD shall Arise to Shake Terribly the Earth. In the spirit of Prophecy David, without reference to dates, was led, perhaps, to the prospect of that Deliverance of his Soul from Hell, and of that Condemnation of the Wicked and the Wicked One, which the Judgment to Come will Confirm. Let the Wicked contemplate but even these awful Designations of the Visitation of DIVINE Wrath, and consider how they shall escape, if they neglect so Gracious a Salvation, as is freely Offered to them! But terrible as is the *representation* here given of DIVINE Vengeance, it is incalculably less, than will be the *Reality*; for as the eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of Man to conceive the Things that The LORD hath Prepared for Them, that love Him; neither hath eye seen, or ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of Man to conceive the Woes that await, for ever and ever, the Rejected of The LORD.

After thus setting before us, in poetic and prophetic spirit, an Image of the Terrors of The LORD, that he may persuade Men to fear Him, Who hath Power to Destroy both Body and Soul in Hell, he reverts to his own temporal Deliverances, and then justifies the Ways of GOD to Man, as A GOD of Mercy, of Righteousness, and of Purity; of Purer Eyes than to Behold iniquity, and yet not Extreme to Mark what is done amiss, nor Willing the death of a Sinner; but Ready to Comfort the Weak-hearted, to Raise up Them that fall, to Bind up the wounds of the contrite Spirit, and to Compassionate us even as a tender Father compassionateth his Children. The Inspired Songster, prophetically uniting his own righteousness as a Saint, with That Righteousness, which was Perfected in his DESCENDANT after the Flesh, the Man CHRIST JESUS (and Which is, as it were, Ingrafted on the Soul of every pious Believer), proclaims the Blessed Fruits of Such faithful Righteousness and Holiness and Charity, Thereon founding his assurance of Salvation, and Thereby exhorting to an observance by Others of that conduct, which will assuredly meet with so exceeding Great

Reward. He then, sinking, as it were, into himself, states the particular Proofs of GOD'S Providence towards him, by Giving to him in manifold and signal Instances the Power and the Victory, and Visiting all his Enemies with confusion; and the Song is concluded with a fine apostrophe to The GOD of his worship, and an obvious admission of the prophetic Spirit That dictated it, by an allusion to That SEED, Which, Springing carnally from himself, should be Spiritually Blessed, and be the Cause of Spiritual Blessings for evermore to all Believers in the same Holy Faith.

“Now these be the last words of David. David, the Son of Jesse, said, and the Man who was raised up on High, the Anointed of The GOD of Jacob, and the sweet Psalmist of Israel, said, ‘The SPIRIT of The LORD Spake by me, and His Word was in my tongue! THE GOD of Israel Said, The ROCK of Israel Spake to me, ‘He, that ruleth over Men, must be just, ruling in the fear of GOD: and he shall be as the light of the morning, when the Sun riseth, even a morning without clouds: as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain.’ Although my House be not so with GOD; yet He hath Made with me an Everlasting Covenant, Ordered in all things, and Sure: for This is All my Salvation, and all my desire; although He Make it not to grow. But the Sons of Belial shall be All of them as thorns thrust away, because they cannot be taken with hands: but the Man, that shall touch them, must be fenced with iron and the staff of a spear: and they shall be utterly burned with fire in the same place.’”—2 Sam. xxiii, 1 to 7.

However abrupt a termination of a History, so interesting and important as David's, this may seem to be, yet as it immediately follows in the Narrative before us, it is here given in that order. The last words of a good Man are oftentimes the most valuable legacy he can leave: valuable not only to the immediate Hearers, on whom the manner, as well as the connection, are calculated to give those words the deepest impressiveness, but also to Others, whether Contemporaries, or of any succeeding Generations, to whom the tidings may be borne. In the approaching hour of death, the Soul, tremblingly alive to the altered state, that instantaneously awaits it, conscious that its Omnipotent and Omniscient CREATOR is Coming unto its immediate Judgment, and that from His Judgment there is no appeal, and knowing that every Man will be there Judged by his works here, and that to form the estimate of them the secrets of all hearts will be laid open, that the motives of all actions will be unfolded, disdains to deal treacherously with itself or with Others, and usually, at least, speaks forth the language of soberness and truth. The great Truths proclaimed by David on such an awful occasion were, that The HOLY GHOST, the SPIRIT of The LORD JEHOVAH had been his Instructor, and had Given piety to his heart and Prophetic utterance to his tongue, Teaching him, what hath been engraven by the Self-same SPIRIT on the consciences of all Men, and is Registered for our admonition in the imperishable Leaves of the Record of the Word of GOD, that all governance over Others and, impliedly, over ourselves, should be by the rules of justice, and in the fear of GOD, Who, with the Merciful will Shew Himself Merciful, and with the upright Man will Shew Himself Upright: and, as an Apostle of The SON of GOD hath said, “He, that turneth Many to righteousness, shall shine as the Stars of Heaven,” so this Prophet and Type of The SON of GOD likens the just and pious Ruler of a People to the most grateful and cheering blessings of Nature diffused by The All-Dispensing Hand of PROVIDENCE in the first burst of Day, and in the lovely hue of vernal meadows refreshed with the dew-drops from Heaven. David then, contemplating what a perfect Man should be, sinks under the consciousness of his own imperfections, and, with an honest and humble heart, disclaims his title to the truly just Man. He had indeed erred, but in a life of so much incident and temptation, who can

say that any Other would have been even so upright? but, though David had sinned, and sinned grievously, he repented of the evil; and where genuine repentance is, there is the Kingdom of Heaven at hand. To the unspeakable consolation, therefore, of his Soul in its contemplation of the immediate hour of death, he says, in allusion to that exalted righteousness, which is perfect in the Sight of GOD, "*Although my House be not so with GOD, yet He hath Made with me an Everlasting Covenant, Ordered in all things and Sure: for This is All my Salvation, and all my desire.*" What, more than such sentiments, confirmed by such conduct, can convey to the mind so impressive a lesson of the value and necessity of seeking in this life the Favour of The ALMIGHTY, that in death He may not only not Abandon us to despair, but that His SPIRIT, Which is emphatically *The COMFORTER*, may then Speak Consolation to our Souls, and Extend to us the Promise of a Participation in the Sure Mercies of David; Mercies, Which Issue from Him, Whose Mercy Endureth for Ever; and Which, indeed, through the Merits of The SPIRITUAL DAVID, are alone the Rock of our Salvation, and should be the never-failing Object of our desire.

The utter desolation and confusion of the Wicked, David Prophetically announces; thus proclaiming his faith in a Judgment to Come, when the Righteous shall go into the Kingdom of Joy; and they, that have done evil, into everlasting fire. And against that Day it behoves All of us to prepare ourselves, and by putting on the whole Armour of GOD to fight the good fight of faith, that we present an impenetrable front against the fiery darts of the Devil; and that we guard against the temptations and snares that unceasingly await us both from without and from within; placing our confidence in GOD, and using the ready Help of The SPIRIT, Who, in every temptation wherewith we are tempted, will Find a ready way for us to escape withal, if we will but choose to walk therein, that we may find rest to our Souls. Let us, therefore, watch and pray, lest we enter into temptation without minds sufficiently fortified to resist it! The Generation of Belial was not confined to the days of David: in every succeeding age these Sons of Perdition, the willing Emissaries of the Evil One, are found, and are zealously affected to extend their reign on Earth by making Converts of Others in the gratification of evil passions, regardless of the interminable ruin in which, as the effect of The OMNIPOTENT'S Displeasure, their own conscience admonishes them they must inevitably be involved, from that awful Day when *The Man* CHRIST JESUS, Fenced with that Iron, which is the Symbol of the Invincible Power of The GOD-HEAD, and having the Staff of the Spear of The SPIRIT, Which is Truth itself, *shall Touch* all the Sons of Belial, and Drive them headlong to the Abyss of Hell, where their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched; but where the stings of remorse and self-condemnation shall be their portion, and the bitterness of woe be upon them at the reflection of having, by their own folly alone, come short of the Kingdom of Heaven, and of being Separated from the Favour of Him, in Whose Love are Life and Peace and Joy Eternal. Let us take heed that we fall not into those lusts and temptations and snares, which drown Men in such destruction and perdition, and leave no way to escape from the evil to come; an evil greater than it hath entered into the heart of Man to conceive, when the Soul, continually suffering the extreme of anguish, shall yet be feelingly alive to the Justice of GOD'S Judgment, though in utter despair of any mitigation of its Punishment. From such incalculable evil the way of escape is now open to us, for The LORD, Whose Word is Truth, hath Said, "*I am The Way and The Light and The Life: he that followeth Me shall never see death; the power of the second Death shall have no dominion over him.*" Thus, and in similar contemplations, may the last words of the sweet Psalmist of Israel be improved to the further-



ance of our Soul's hope of joining with him in the Land of Spirits, and singing Hallelujah, for that The LORD GOD Omnipotent Reigneth, when the Beauty of Holiness shall be upon us; for He, The MOST HOLY ONE, will be both our SAVIOUR and SANCTIFIER.

△ In the same Book, bearing the Prophet Samuel's name, though obviously written by some other hand, or at some other time, to supply, as it were, some omission in the preceding history, the following account of the Chiefs and Captains and principal Men about David is introduced.

*"These be the names of the mighty Men, whom David had: The Tachmonite, that sat in the seat, Chief among the Captains; the same was Adino, the Ezmite; he lifted up his spear against eight Hundred, whom he slew at one time. And after him was Eleazer, the Son of Dodo, the Ahohite, One of the three mighty Men with David when they defied the Philistines, that were there gathered together to battle, and the Men of Israel were gone away; he arose, and smote the Philistines until his hand was weary, and his hand clave unto the sword: and The LORD Wrought a great Victory that day: and the People returned after him only to spoil. And after him was Shammah, the Son of Agee, the Hararite: and the Philistines were gathered together into a troop, where was a piece of ground full of lentiles; and the People fled from the Philistines; but he stood in the midst of the ground, and defended it, and slew the Philistines: and The LORD Wrought a great Victory. And Three of the thirty Chief went down, and came to David in the harvest time unto the Cave of Adullam: and the Troop of the Philistines pitched in the Valley of Rephaim: and David was then in an hold, and the Garrison of the Philistines was then in Beth-lehem: and David longed, and said, 'Oh that One would give me drink of the water of the well of Beth-lehem, which is by the gate!' And the three mighty Men brake through the Host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Beth-lehem, that was by the gate, and took it, and brought it to David: nevertheless he would not drink thereof, but poured it out unto The LORD: and he said, 'Be it far from me, O LORD, that I should do this! Is not this the Blood of the Men, that went in jeopardy of their Lives?' Therefore he would not drink it. These things did these three mighty Men."—2 Sam. xxiii, 8 to 17.*

The same account is given with slight variations in the 1st Book of Chronicles, chapter xi, 10 to 19.

As the wisdom of a Ruler is chiefly manifested, and the utility of his government established, by the selection of able Ministers, so in this description of the chiefest Officers of David's Army, proof is afforded equally of the discriminate judgment and exemplary influence of David: the native attachment of David to Beth-lehem, and the devotedness of his Followers to gratify him even in his native prejudices, exhibit no uninteresting feature in his history; but his piety, when, on reflection, he found his partiality had unnecessarily hazarded the Lives of his faithful and devoted Followers, in restraining his appetite, and giving that in sacrifice unto GOD, on which his heart had been so set, is peculiarly observable and worthy of imitation. The heart will sometimes dictate wishes with so much earnestness, that Those, whose happiness it is to increase the sum of it in Others, will, at any sacrifice of personal or pecuniary devotedness, strive to gratify them; but it behoves us to consider whether the price paid by Others for our indulgencies, may not have been too dear, and whether, to prevent a recurrence of similar exposure, we should not forego their enjoyment. Amidst the deprivations to which a state of war is subjected, David had been blessed with the sight of water from the cherished Place of his birth, and a cup of it was presented to his lips to cheer his heart and satisfy his acknowledged longings; it was, moreover, presented by the hands of those, whose hearts were so zealously affected towards him, as, at the bare mention of his wants, to fly on

wings of friendship with the boldness and rapidity of an eagle, to satisfy them, regardless of the imminent peril to which they subjected themselves; and though they must have known that water from one well would have equally answered the purposes of nature as that from another, it was presented, therefore, with the hope that such concurring circumstance would render it peculiarly acceptable; and so great was the esteem in which David was held by them, at such his acceptance of even a cup full of cold water would have repaid all toil, and compensated for the peril that attended its procuring: but David's soul was never long a wanderer from the Ways of its GOD; he was not, indeed, perfect in purity, (and who is there, among all the Sons of Men, that is without offence, and blameless in the Sight of The All-Pure GOD?) but when reflection came to his aid, he did not hesitate in acknowledging his error, and sought in humility and self-denial the appointed means of atonement and reconciliation.

"And Abishai, the Brother of Joab, the Son of Zeruiah, was Chief among three. And he lifted up his spear against three Hundred, and slew them, and had his name among Three: was he not most honourable of Three? therefore he was their Captain: howbeit he attained not unto the first Three. And Benaiah, the Son of Joiada, the Son of a valiant Man, of Kabzeel, who had done many Acts, he slew a lion-like Men of Moab: he went down also, and slew a lion in the midst of a time of snow: and he slew an Egyptian, a goodly Man: and the Egyptian had a spear in his hand; but he went down to him with a staff, and plucked the ear out of the Egyptian's hand, and slew him with his own spear. These things did Benaiah, the Son of Jehoiada, and had the name among three mighty Men: he is more honourable than the Thirty, but he attained not to the first Three. And David set him over his Guard. Asahel, the Brother of Joab, was One of the Thirty; Hanan, the Son of Dodo of Beth-lehem, Shammah the Harodite, Elika the Harodite, Helez the Paltite, Ira, the Son of Ikkeish the Tekoite, Abiezer the Beth-nethothite, Mebunnai the Hushathite, Zalmon the Ahohite, Maharai the Netophathite, Heleb, the Son of Baanah, a Netophathite, Ittai, the Son of Ribai, out of Gath, of the Children of Benjamin, Benaiah the Pirathonite, Hiddai of the Geraites, of Gaash, Abi-albon the Arbathite, Azmaveth the Barhumite, Eliahba the Gathite, of the Sons of Jashen, Jonathan, Shammah the Hararite, Ahiam, the Son of Sharar the Hararite, Eliphelet, the Son of Ahasbai, the Son of the Gathite, Eliam, the Son of Ahithophel the Gilonite, Hezrai the Carmelite, Ithraai the Arbathite, Igal, the Son of Nathan of Zobah, Bani the Gadite, Zelek the Ammonite, Nahari the Beerothite, Armour-bearer to Joab, the Son of Zeruiah, Ira the Ithrite, Gareb an Ithrite, Uriah the Hittite: thirty and seven in all."—Sam. xxiii, 18 to 39.

In the xi and xii chapters of the 1st Chronicles, a much more extended account is given of the distinguished Followers of David, and in which it is, amongst other matters, recorded that "There came of the Children of Benjamin and Judah to the Hold unto David. And David went out to meet them, and answered and said unto them, 'If ye be come peaceably unto me to help me, mine arm shall be knit unto you: but if ye be come to betray me to mine Enemies, sing there is no wrong in mine hands, The GOD of our Fathers Look thereon, and rebuke it! Then the Spirit came upon Amasai, who was Chief of the Captains, and he said, 'Thine are we, David, and on thy side, thou Son of Jesse: peace, peace unto thee, and peace be to thine Helpers! for thy GOD Helpeth thee.' Then David received them, and made them Captains of the Band."—1 Chron. xii, 16 to 18.

In the account supplied by the Book of Samuel, the list of Worthies is given with the name of Uriah, who, though last, and, therefore perhaps, least estimation, we have seen devote himself to the cause of David in a spirit of fidelity, loyalty, and disinterestedness, yea, even with a wilful privation, through a

sense of honour that would have reflected lustre from a Kingly mind; and if such virtue, produced perhaps by example, belonged to almost the least among them, what estimable and valuable qualities must have resided in the Others! On Uriah's lamentable fate, so wholly unmerited, observations have been already offered. In the extract from the Chronicle history, we see, during the life of Saul, Men of his own Tribe, Benjaminites, and Others from the immediate seat of government, Men of the Tribe of Judah, generously devoting themselves to David's interest at the hazard of every connection and treasure they may have possessed or valued. Indeed, so extraordinary in David's eyes seemed the sacrifice, that he doubted the sincerity of the motive; but without exercising his power to allay his suspicions by any severe or arbitrary dealings with them, he, in the consciousness of innocence and of an upright cause, appealed to That GOD, Who is the DISCERNER of Spirits, Whose Eye is equally upon the Righteous and the Wicked, Who Knoweth the secrets of all hearts, to Whom the darkness and light are both alike, and Whose Providence no power can controul, to Judge and to Execute Judgment between them. How exemplary is such a confidence! and had not David himself afterwards departed from the known and admitted Law of his GOD, Amasai, the Spokesman of this Band, and the Oracle of their common pledge of loyalty to him, would not, in all probability, have lent his aid in the rebellion of Absalom; nor might Absalom himself have dared to raise his voice in defiance of his Father, if that Father had not forsaken his allegiance to The GOVERNOR of the Universe.

△ The Book of Chronicles afterwards goes on to enumerate the Force, that was attached to David, prefacing it by saying, that "*At that time, day by day, there came to David to help him, until it was a great Host, like the Host of GOD; and these are the numbers of the Bands, that were ready armed to the war, and came to David to Hebron, to turn the kingdom of Saul to him, according to the Word of The LORD. The Children of Judah, that bare shield and spear, were six thousand and eight hundred, ready armed to the war: of the Children of Simeon, mighty Men of valour for the war, seven thousand and one hundred: of the Children of Levi four thousand and six hundred: and Jehoiada was the Leader of the Aaronites, and with him were three thousand and seven hundred: and Zudok, a young Man, mighty of valour, and of his Father's house twenty and two Captains: and of the Children of Benjamin, the Kindred of Saul, three thousand; for hitherto the greatest part of them had kept the ward of the House of Saul: and of the Children of Ephraim twenty thousand and eight hundred, mighty Men of valour, famous throughout the House of their Fathers: and of the half Tribe of Manasseh eighteen thousand, which were expressed by name, to come and make David King: and of the Children of Issachar, which were Men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do; the heads of them were two hundred; and all their Brethren were at their commandment: of Zebulun, Such as went forth to battle, expert in war, with all instruments of war, fifty thousand, which could keep rank; they were not of double heart: and of Napthali a thousand Captains, and with them with shield and spear, thirty and seven thousand; and of the Danites, expert in war, twenty and eight thousand and six hundred: and of Asher, such as went forth to battle, expert in war, forty thousand: and on the other side of Jordan, of the Reubenites and the Gadites, and of the half Tribe of Manasseh, with all manner of instruments of war for the battle, an hundred and twenty thousand. All these Men of war, that could keep rank, came with a perfect heart to Hebron, to make David King over all Israel: and all the Rest also of Israel were of one heart to make David King.*"—1 Chron. xii, 22, to 38.

What further testimony could be needed of the exalted character of David as far as Human opinion can advance it? but great as was his fame when alive,

et his posthumous reputation has infinitely exceeded it, and of all the Kings, that have reigned in any of the Countries of the Earth, either before or after him, who is there to compare with him in that most excellent greatness, "holiness unto The LORD," and of good will in the diffusion of that spirit of holiness into his Fellow-Men?

*"And there they were with David three days, eating and drinking: for their Brethren had prepared for them: moreover they, that were nigh them, even unto Issachar and Zebulun and Naphtali, brought bread on asses and on camels and on mules and on oxen, and meat, meal, cakes of figs, and bunches of raisins, and wine, and oil, and oxen and sheep abundantly; for there was joy in Israel."*—1 Chron. xii, 39 to 40.

What blessings, as is here seen, does a great and exalted Character diffuse through a Community, and how abundantly is it sometimes repaid for its good offices and intentions in the life that is! Did the Possessors of superior power put so use it as that they might reign by love in the hearts of those they are called upon to preside over, how would their own hearts be filled with joy unspeakable, and full of glory in that awful hour of unsparing death, when the mightiest Monarch of the Earth, equally with the meanest of his Vassals, must prepare for the Audit of his account by The Almighty and Omniscient JUDGE of Quick and Dead! How would every King of Israel, at that instant, have wished that in his reign, and as the fruit of his conduct and governance there had been "joy in Israel." And this liberal dealing of the Israelites with David is a lesson to other Subjects to cherish a right feeling of loyalty towards a patriot King, and to give heartily unto him, as the common Centre of union for the general good.

*"And again the Anger of The LORD was Kindled against Israel, and He Moved David against them to say, 'Go, number Israel and Judah.' For the King said to Joab, the Captain of the Host, which was with him, 'Go now through all the Tribes of Israel from Dan even to Beer-sheba, and number ye the People, that I may know the number of the People.' And Joab said unto the King, 'Now The LORD, thy GOD, Add unto the People, how many soever they be, an hundredfold, and that the eyes of my Lord, the King, may see it! But why doth my Lord, the King, delight in this thing?' Notwithstanding the King's word prevailed against Joab, and against the Captains of the Host. And Joab and the Captains of the Host went out from the presence of the King, to number the People of Israel. And they passed over Jordan and pitched in Aroer, on the right side of the City, that lieth in the midst of the River of Gad, and toward Jazer: then they came to Gilead, and to the Land of Tahtim-hodshi, and they came to Dan-jaan, and about to Zidon, and came to the strong Hold of Tyre, and to all the Cities of the Hivites, and of the Canaanites: and they went out to the south of Judah, even to Beer-sheba. So when they had gone through all the Land, they came to Jerusalem at the end of nine months and twenty days. And Joab gave up the sum of the number of the People unto the King: and there were in Israel eight hundred thousand valiant Men, that drew the sword: and the Men of Judah were five hundred thousand Men. And David's heart smote him after that he had numbered the People. And David said unto The LORD, 'I have sinned greatly in that I have done: and now, I beseech Thee, O LORD, Take away the iniquity of Thy Servant! for I have done very foolishly.' For when David was up in the morning, the Word of The LORD Came unto the Prophet Gad, David's Seer, Saying, 'Go and say unto David, 'Thus Saith The LORD, 'I Offer thee three Things: choose thee One of them! that I may Do it unto thee.' So Gad came to David, and told him, and said unto him, 'Shall seven years of Famine come unto thee in thy Land? or wilt thou flee three months before thine Enemies, while they pursue thee? or that there be three days*

*Pestilence in thy Land? Now advise, and see what answer I shall return to Him That Sent me!* And David said unto Gad, *'I am in a great strait: let us fall now into the Hand of The LORD! for His Mercies are Great; and let me not fall into the hand of Man!'* So The LORD Sent a Pestilence upon Israel from the morning even to the time Appointed: and there died of the People, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, seventy thousand Men."—2 Sam. xxiv, 1 to 15.

How inconstant and inconsistent is the mind of Man! David, hitherto Supported through every trial and temptation by The DIVINE Assistance, and made triumphant over all his Enemies, in the weakness or vanity of his heart (regardless of the indisputable Truths, that The LORD Saveth by Many or by Few; and that a Host, how numerous soever, is but as dust before a whirlwind, if The LORD Go not forth with their arms; that it is better to trust in The LORD, than to put any confidence in Man; and that the arm of flesh falls nerveless and useless by the side, if The Might of its MAKER be not continued unto it), directs the People to be numbered, that the extent of the Force, upon which, as he vainly conceives, he could rely for warlike operations, might be ascertained; an act, which in its exemplary influence was likely to make an humble trust in The GOD of Battles give place to a proud and presumptuous confidence in Man. Had this been the effect of a mental suggestion not sufficiently deliberated upon, the offence might have been Overlooked; but the Counsellors of State, with Joab, the Commander-in-chief of the Armies, at their head, offered their remonstrances, and presented respectfully their protests against the measure. Still David, obstinately bent on the gratification of his object, and left without DIVINE Counsel on the occasion, because he sought It not as heretofore, but daringly depended on his own judgment, persisted in issuing the order, which was accordingly acted upon, and the King was, in consequence, informed of the numbers of his Warriors in the two Divisions of his Kingdom, Israel and Judah. And what did this knowledge profit him withal? The first effect of it was to smite his conscience with the impiety of his conduct, and to bend him in terror and self-abasement before The LORD, on the Displeasure of That LORD being Revealed to him by His Prophet. His act of concession is followed by contrition, sorrow succeeding his *sense* of sin, and these are followed by a fervent prayer for pardon and reconciliation. The Anger of The LORD, however, Requiring a peace-offering for His Peoples' good, lest they, becoming presumptuous and self-willed, might be made Aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel, and Strangers to the Covenant of Promise, (Which Depended on faith and obedience,) and they be without hope and without GOD in the World, David is called upon to choose among three impending Visitations of DIVINE Chastisement; and both his judgment and faith are conspicuously manifested in the choice he makes, "*Let us fall into the Hand of The LORD, for His Mercies are Great; and let me not fall into the hand of Man!*" Neither does he assume to select between those Judgments that would be exclusively of DIVINE Infliction; between Pestilence and Famine, he resigns the Choice to The GOD of all Mercy, saying, in effect, "Thy Will, O LORD, be Done," thereby exemplifying the truth, that, when unenlightened by the Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT, we know not even what we should *pray* for as we ought, unless The SPIRIT Helpeth our infirmities. The result of this sudden Judgment from On High, so greatly diminishing, as it did, the physical strength of David's Army and Nation, proves how vain is the hope of Man, when it is not founded on the Help of The LORD; and that to seek The LORD, and seek His Face and the Favour of His Countenance is the only way to obtain Salvation.

The account from the Chronicles is thus:—

"And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel.

*And David said to Joab and to the Rulers of the People, 'Go, number Israel from Beer-sheba even to Dan; and bring the number of them to me, that I may know it!' And Joab answered, 'The LORD Make His People an hundred times so many more as they be! But my Lord, the King, are they not All my Lord's Servants? why then doth my Lord require this thing? why will he be a cause of trespass to Israel?' Nevertheless the King's word prevailed against Joab. Wherefore Joab departed, and went throughout all Israel, and came to Jerusalem. And Joab gave the sum of the number of the People unto David. And all they of Israel were a thousand thousand and an hundred thousand Men, that drew sword: and Judah was four hundred threescore and ten thousand Men, that drew sword. But Levi and Benjamin counted he not among them: for the King's word was abominable to Joab. And GOD was Displeased with this thing: therefore He Smote Israel. And David said unto GOD, 'I have sinned greatly, because I have done this thing: but now, I beseech Thee, Do away the iniquity of Thy Servant! for I have done very foolishly.' And The LORD Spake unto Gad, David's Seer, Saying, 'Go and tell David, saying, 'Thus Saith The LORD, I Offer thee three Things: choose thee One of them, that I may Do it unto thee!' So Gad came to David and said unto him, 'Thus Saith The LORD, 'Choose thee either three years Famine; or three months to be destroyed before thy Foes, while that the sword of thine Enemies overtaketh thee; or else three days the Sword of The LORD, even the Pestilence, in the Land, and the Angel of The LORD Destroying throughout all the Coasts of Israel! Now therefore advise thyself what word I shall bring again to Him That Sent me!' And David said unto Gad, 'I am in a great strait: let me fall now into the Hand of The LORD! for very Great are His Mercies. But let me not fall into the hand of Man!' So The LORD Sent Pestilence upon Israel: and there fell of Israel seventy thousand Men.'—1 Chron. xxi, 1 to 14.*

The Author of all evil, Satan, emphatically called "the Tempter," is here held forth as the Prompter to David to do evil in the Sight of The LORD, having, as in the instance of the holy Job, Permission from On High to try David's Spirit, whether it were, under every circumstance, of GOD; for it is impossible that any evil suggestion could originate with Him, "*Who is of Purer Eyes than to Behold iniquity, Who Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but Rejoiceth in the Truth; neither Tempteth He any Man.*" Satan, therefore, whose paths are the paths of the Destroyer, led the way, and David, in an unguarded hour, full-flushed with the pride of life, followed; and, following, stumbled and fell, being no longer Upheld by the Gracious Arm of The ALMIGHTY, having, indeed, rejected Its Aid, and trusted to the arm of flesh. But ere he passed into the ways, that lead unto death, The SPIRIT of The LORD, in the Wonder and Greatness of DIVINE Love, strove with him, and in the Person of Joab, the very Captain of David's Host, and who, in piety to his GOD, fell, in general, far short of David, expostulated with him on the impiety of the act, and urged him to forego his purpose: shewing that even he had confidence in the sufficiency of Israel's and of Judah's power to overcome all their Enemies, if they made The LORD their Strength, and The MOST HIGH their confidence. But David rejected his salutary counsel, and followed the bent of his own evil imaginations, rendering the Grace of that Wisdom, Which is from Above, thus Mercifully Vouchsafed to Save him from his impious intentions, of no avail. Joab, with prophetic power, seems to have looked on the evil, that would befall his Country, if the King's purpose were persevered in; and to have seen that this mandate of the King, if acted on, would be "a cause of trespass to Israel," from numbers, perhaps, of the People giving way to the same unhallowed feeling, that dictated the measure. There is a variance in the returns according to the two accounts, one giving 800,000, the other 1,100,000 as the number of fighting Men of Israel;

this may be explained by the use, in the former case, of "valiant," meaning fighting Men, as applied to Individuals, and which is omitted in the other: there is also a difference of 30,000 in the numbering the Men of Judah. In the one also is noticed the omission of the Tribe of Benjamin in the census, which in the other is not; though the fact would not be the less so from such omission—it was, of course, that the Levites would not be included in a military calculation: further variance will be found in the number of years of famine offered, as one of the Chastisements to be selected from, the one naming seven, the other three; but the latter seems the most probable, three being connected with each of the other Judgments, and three being also the number of the Judgments from Which the choice was to be made. To inaccuracy in transcribing may some differences probably be attributable.

△ *"And when the Angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to Destroy it, The LORD Repented Him of the evil, and Said to the Angel, that Destroyed the People, 'It is enough; stay now thine hand!' And the Angel of The LORD was by the threshing-place of Araunah, the Jebusite. And David spake unto The LORD, when he saw the Angel, that smote the People, and said, 'Lo, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly! but these Sheep, what have they done? Let Thine Hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my Father's House!' And Gad came that day to David, and said unto him, 'Go up! rear an Altar unto The LORD in the threshing-floor of Araunah, the Jebusite!' And David, according to the saying of Gad, went up as The LORD Commanded. And Araunah looked, and saw the King and his Servants coming on toward him: and Araunah went out, and bowed himself before the King on his face upon the ground. And Araunah said, 'Wherefore is my Lord, the King, come to his Servant?' And David said, 'To buy the threshing-floor of thee, to build an Altar unto The LORD, that the Plague may be stayed from the People.' And Araunah said unto David, 'Let my Lord, the King, take and offer up what seemeth good unto him! behold, here be oxen for Burnt-Sacrifice, and threshing instruments, and other instruments of the oxen for wood.' All these things did Araunah, as a King, give unto the King. And Araunah said unto the King, 'The LORD, thy GOD, Accept thee!' And the King said unto Araunah, 'Nay; but I will surely buy it of thee at a price: neither will I offer Burnt-Offerings unto The LORD, my GOD, of that, which doth cost me nothing.' So David bought the threshing-floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver. And David built there an Altar unto The LORD, and offered Burnt-Offerings and Peace-Offerings. So The LORD was Intreated for the Land, and the Plague was Stayed from Israel."—2 Sam. xxiv, 16 to 25.*

From the number that died of the Plague in the short space of three days, or, possibly, even less, it is obvious that some Supernatural Agent must have been employed in the business of Destruction, and a destroying Angel is recorded as the Instrument; through his active Agency the work of death went so violently on, that The ALMIGHTY Forgot, as it were, the cause of His Anger, and Interposed in Clemency, that the Plague might be Stayed: Jerusalem was thus Rescued from Desolation, and One Instance exhibited of the Truth of the Pathetic Address of the SON of GOD, when Made Man, to His Patriot City,—*"Oh Jerusalem! Jerusalem! how oft would I have Gathered your Children under My Wings, even as a hen gathereth her young ones, and ye would not!"* The deep sorrow of David, for the further folly he had wrought in Israel, went up as incense to the Throne of Grace, and drew down Mercy from On High. Such is the invariable influence of true penitence of heart, and a full acknowledgment of the Just Judgment of GOD in His Dealings with Mankind. David, it is true, in one sense, seemed to arraign the Justness of the Judgment as Visited on the, to him, seemingly unoffending People; but he, nevertheless, might have erred in so

ating the People; and that the Anger of The LORD was but too justly Roused. He attempts not to deny, but on the contrary imprecates that the Rod of chastisement should be Visited on his back, and that by his stripes the People should be healed. The presence of the Monarch, where most the evil prevailed, hews his Fatherly anxiety for the condition of his People. He did not confine himself to his chamber, in unfeeling inaction, till the Storm of DIVINE Vengeance had Passed over the Land; and, though he knew that only three days' continuance would be Allowed It for Operation, he interposed with a humanity and a humility, that marked the generous virtues of his heart, to have the Shafts of DIVINE Justice Averted from the bosoms of the People, and Pointed to his own. The prayer of David was Heard, and the Pardon of himself and the People granted. The voice of Religion dictates a Peace-offering being made, and the consecration of an Altar for the purposes of future, as well as present Sacrifices. To this end David hastens to acquire the spot especially designated for the holy service; and, though offered it without money and without price, and with it all that was necessary for the Sacrifice, he will not so lightly esteem the Office of education and devotion to his GOD. He not only, as a King, demands *not* the surrender of the property thus needed for general Service in a period of generally impending calamity: but, when pressed upon his gratuitous acceptance with a warmth of loyalty and affection that did equal honour to Araunah and to David, receives it as a present, and takes it only as a purchase, rendering, doubtless, an ample equivalent in value, though the accounts materially vary in amount. But from the conduct of David on this occasion the just and righteous precept is inculcated, in whatsoever we do of religious dedication, to do it *heartily, as unto The LORD*, and not unto Men. To think that Other's oblations will expiate our offences is vain and foolish, for The LORD Looketh upon the heart, and by His actions will be Weighed and Valued. Even the Expiatory Sacrifice of The SON of GOD, Vast and Comprehensive as It is, will not Avail Any, that superadds a sacrifice of their own, making no other offering to The LORD, but such as cost them nothing. The unfeigned contrition of David and his House was his sacrifice to The LORD, that was well Pleasing in His Sight; and, as the type of their heart-bleeding sensations, at having so justly provoked The DIVINE Wrath and Indignation, the blood of bulls and of goats was an accepted sacrifice. THE LORD, in Manifestation of His Mercy, Which never faileth, did, therefore, Arrest the Progress of the Disease, and Restore to His servant David and his People the Blessings of bodily health and Spiritual Peace.

From the Chronicles the following narrative is drawn:—

*"And GOD Sent an Angel unto Jerusalem to Destroy it: and as he was Destroying, The LORD Beheld, and He Repented Him of the evil, and Said to the Angel that Destroyed, 'It is enough! Stay now thine hand.'" And the Angel of The LORD stood by the threshing-floor of Ornan, the Jebusite. And David lifted up his eyes and saw the Angel of The LORD stand between the Earth and the Heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem. Then David and the Elders of Israel, who were clothed in sackcloth, fell upon their faces. And David said unto GOD, 'Is it not I, that commanded the People to be numbered? even I it is, that have sinned and done evil indeed: but as for these sheep, what have they done? Let Thine Hand, I pray Thee, O LORD, my GOD, Be on us, and on my Father's House; but not on Thy People, that they should be lagued!' Then the Angel of The LORD Commanded Gad to say to David, that David should go up, and set up an Altar unto The LORD in the threshing-floor of Ornan, the Jebusite. And David went up at the saying of Gad, which he spake in the Name of The LORD. And Ornan turned back, and saw the Angel: and* △



his four Sons with him hid themselves. Now Ornan was threshing wheat. And as David came to Ornan, Ornan looked and saw David, and went out of the threshing-floor, and bowed himself to David with his face to the ground. Then David said to Ornan, 'Grant me the place of this threshing-floor, that I may build an Altar therein unto The LORD! thou shalt grant it me for the full price: that the Plague may be Stayed from the People.' And Ornan, said unto David, 'Take it to thee, and let my Lord, the King, do that which is good in his eyes! lo, I give thee the oxen also for Burnt-Offerings, and the threshing instruments for wood, and the wheat for the Meat-Offering: I give it all.' And King David said to Ornan, 'Nay: but I will verily buy it for the full price: for I will not take that, which is thine, for The LORD, nor offer Burnt-Offerings without cost.' So David gave to Ornan for the place six hundred shekels of gold by weight. And David built there an Altar unto The LORD, and offered Burnt-offerings and Peace-Offerings, and called upon The LORD. And He answered him from Heaven by Fire upon the Altar of Burnt-Offering. And The LORD Commanded the Angel: and he put up his sword again into the sheath thereof."—1 Chron. xxi, 15 to 27.

The account thus given, though substantially similar, is somewhat more circumstantial. The representation of the abject state of humility to which David and the Elders had voluntarily subjected themselves, from a principle of most unquestionable piety, is interesting and encouraging. David, as King, and triumphant over all his Enemies, had no end of hypocrisy to serve in fasting and praying in sackcloth and ashes. He knew that there was ONE, and Only ONE, Who was Mighty to Save, and from Whom Alone could Come Help in the fearful time of need; Who could Deliver from the Pestilence, that walketh in darkness, and from the Destruction, that wasteth at noon-day. David, therefore, in true piety of Soul, sought to abide under the Shadow of The ALMIGHTY, and sought, through those means by which Such Protection is secured, by penitence and prayer. He not only confesses his sin generally but particularly, and calls aloud for Judgment on himself, and that the People should be Suffered to go free. But The LORD, Who is Wonderful in Mercy, in Repenting Him of the evil against the People, Willeth not the death of the Sinner, that provoked His Anger, but rather that he should turn unto Him, and live. HE, therefore, in Manifestation of the efficacy of prayer, when fervently addressed, Spread the Heavenly Flame of DIVINE Illumination on the Altar: and in like Manner doth He Gild the countenance of all His Votaries with the Assurance of Salvation, Bidding every heart exclaim with confidence unfeigned, "*The LORD is my Refuge and Fortress, my GOD! in Him will I trust.*"

△ "At that time, when David saw that The LORD had Answered him in the threshing-floor of Ornan, the Jebusite, then he sacrificed there: for the Tabernacle of The LORD, which Moses made in the Wilderness, and the Altar of the Burnt-Offering, were at that season in the High Place at Gibeon. But David could not go before it to inquire of GOD: for he was afraid, because of the sword of the Angel of The LORD. Then David said, 'This is the House of The LORD GOD, and This is the Altar of the Burnt-Offering for Israel.' And David commanded to gather together the Strangers, that were in the Land of Israel: and he set Masons to hew wrought stones to build the House of GOD: and David prepared iron in abundance for the nails for the doors of the gates, and for the joinings; and brass in abundance without weight: also cedar trees in abundance: for the Zidonians and they of Tyre brought much cedar wood to David. And David said, 'Solomon, my Son, is young and tender, and the House, that is to be builded for The LORD, must be exceeding magnifical, of fame and of glory throughout all Countries: I will therefore now make preparation for it.' So David prepared abundantly before his death. Then he called for Solomon, his Son, and charged

im to build an House for The LORD GOD of Israel. And David said to Solomon, 'My Son, as for me, it was in my mind to build an House unto the Name of The LORD, my GOD: but the Word of The LORD Came to me, Saying, Thou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great wars: thou shalt not build an House unto My Name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the Earth in My Sight. Behold, a Son shall be born to thee, who shall be a Man of rest: and I will Give him Rest from all his Enemies round about: for his name shall be Solomon (that is, peaceable), and I will Give Peace and Quietness unto Israel in his days. He shall build an House for My Name: and he shall be My Son, and I will be his FATHER: and I will Establish the throne of his Kingdom over Israel for ever.' Now my Son, The LORD be with thee; and prosper thou, and build the House of The LORD, thy GOD, as He hath Said of thee. Only The LORD Give thee Wisdom and Understanding, and Give thee Charge concerning Israel, that thou mayest keep the Law of The LORD, thy GOD: Then shalt thou prosper, if thou takest heed to fulfil the Statutes and Judgments, Which The LORD Charged Moses with concerning Israel: be strong and of good courage; dread not, nor be dismayed! Now, behold, in my trouble I have prepared for the House of The LORD an hundred thousand talents of gold, and a thousand thousand talents of silver, and of brass and iron without weight; for it is in abundance: timber also and stone have I prepared: and thou mayest add thereto. Moreover there are Workmen with thee in abundance, Hewers and Workers of stone and timber, and all manner of cunning Men for every manner of work. Of the gold, the silver, and the brass, and the iron there is no number. Arise, therefore, and be doing; and The LORD be with thee.' David also commanded all the Princes of Israel to help Solomon, his Son, saying, 'Is not The LORD, your GOD, with you? and hath He not Given you Rest on every side? for He hath Given the Inhabitants of the Land into mine hand; and the Land is subdued before The LORD and before His People. Now set your heart and your Soul to seek The LORD, your GOD: arise, therefore, and build ye the Sanctuary of The LORD GOD, to bring the Ark of the Covenant of The LORD, and the holy Vessels of GOD, into the House, that is to be built to the Name of The LORD.'"—1 Chron. xxi, 28 to 30, and xxii.

David finding The DIVINE Reconciliation Extended towards himself and his People, venerates the Place, whence the glad Tidings of Peace were Imparted to him, and dedicates it in his mind to the site of the Temple, which he meant should be erected to the Glory of GOD. With a dignity and generosity (Humanly speaking) worthy the Occasion, he makes preparations for the sacred Building, surpassing all prior Human efforts, and such as in their consummation were calculated to advance the Glory of GOD upon Earth; thus doing, with all his might, whatsoever, according to the Revealed Will of his GOD, his hand found to do, and reverently forbearing where That Will Dictated forbearance. No little feeling of jealousy actuated his Soul at the prospect of the glory of the work, though due to the Father's conception, being Taken from the Sire and vested in the Son. David heartily aspired to bring about the worship of GOD in all the beauty of Holiness, and to induce his Fellow-Man to render unto their Common MAKER some proofs of the sense of His Being The GIVER of all Things. With an ingenuousness, that formed one of the many bright jewels of his Kingly crown, he, in imparting to his Son the great design he had in view, admits that The LORD Withheld from him the fulfilment of so meritorious a purpose, and Reserved that honour for the Son he was addressing. In this intercourse we see, that (however unconsciously so perhaps to David, or but imperfectly understood by him,) The SPIRIT of Prophecy was upon him; for though "peaceable" was the character, as well as name, of Solomon (for in Hebrew, according to the margin, Solomon has that meaning), and uninterrupted

as was the tranquillity of his lengthened reign, yet was Solomon but a *type* in that quality of The SPIRITUAL SON of David, JESUS, The MESSIAH, Who was The PRINCE of Peace, The KING of Kings, and of Whose Kingdom there shall be no end. HE it is, That is emphatically The MAN of Rest; for with a Power, the Exercise of Which nothing can interrupt, He Proclaims from His first Advent to this present hour and in all future time, "*Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will Give you Rest.*" HE, indeed, has Built an House for the Name of The LORD, in comparison with Which the glory of Solomon's Temple is but as the shadow to the Substance—a star of feeble lustre, lost in the transcendant Brightness of a mid-day Sun; for the Temple, That The PRINCE of Peace has Erected, is A Church Universal, or That will eventually Become so; and the Glory and the Honour of all Nations shall be brought into It.

After thus making known to his Son, according to his conception of It, The DIVINE Will and Purpose, David, in a Patriarchal and truly Parental spirit, endeavours to excite in his Son's heart a disposition to righteousness and holiness of life, inculcating the true and important doctrine, that "all true Wisdom is from Above,"—a doctrine which he enforces by the awfulness of prayer. "*The LORD Give thee Wisdom and Understanding, that thou mayest keep the Law of The LORD, thy GOD!*" adding, that on his observance of That Law would depend his prosperity, and the fulfilment of the Gracious Promises of GOD respecting him. Then, after again exhorting Solomon to the Holy Work, and convening the great Men of his Kingdom to avow before them his testamentary wish, and to induce their concurrence therein, he, in the same spirit of piety, admonishes them "*to set their heart and Soul to seek The LORD, their GOD!*"

△ "So when David was old and full of days, he made Solomon, his Son, King over Israel. And he gathered together all the Princes of Israel, with the Priests and the Levites: now the Levites were numbered from the age of thirty years and upward: and their number by their polls, Man by Man, was thirty and eight thousand: of which twenty and four thousand were to set forward the work of the House of The LORD: and six thousand were Officers and Judges: moreover four thousand were Porters: and four thousand praised The LORD 'with the instruments which I made,' said David, 'to praise therewith.' And David divided them into Courses among the Sons of Levi, namely, Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. Of the Gershonites were Laadan and Shimei; the Sons of Laadan; the Chief was Jehiel, and Zetham, and Joel, three. The Sons of Shimei; Shelomith, and Haziël, and Haran, three. These were the Chief of the Fathers of Laadan. And the Sons of Shimei were Johath, Zina, and Jeush, and Beriah. These four were the Sons of Shimei. And Jahath was the Chief, and Zizah the second: but Jeush and Beriah had not many Sons; therefore they were in one reckoning, according to their Father's House. The Sons of Kohath; Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel, four: the Sons of Amram, Aaron, and Moses; and Aaron was separated, that he should sanctify the most holy things, he and his Sons for ever, to burn incense before The LORD, to minister unto Him, and to bless in His Name for ever. Now concerning Moses, the Man of GOD, his Sons were named of the Tribe of Levi. The Sons of Moses were Gershom and Eliezer. Of the Sons of Gershom, Shebuel was the Chief. And the Sons of Eliezer were Rehabiah the Chief. And Eliezer had none other Sons: but the Sons of Rehabiah were very many. Of the Sons of Izhar; Shelomith the Chief. Of the Sons of Hebron, Jeriah the first, Amariah the second, Jahaziël the third, and Jekameam the fourth. Of the Sons of Uzziel; Micah the first, and Jesiah the second. The Sons of Merari; Mahli and Mushi. The Sons of Mahli; Eliazar and Kish: and Eliazar died and had no Sons, but

*Daughters; and their Brethren the Sons of Kish took them. The Sons of Mushi; Mahli and Eder, and Jeremoth, three. These were the Sons of Levi after the House of their Fathers; even the Chief of the Fathers, as they were counted by number of names by their polls, that did the work for the service of the House of The LORD, from the age of twenty years and upward: for David said, 'The LORD GOD of Israel hath Given Rest unto his People, that they may dwell in Jerusalem for ever: and also unto the Levites; they shall no more carry the Tabernacle, nor any Vessels of it for the service thereof:' for by the last words of David the Levites were numbered from twenty years old and above: because their office was to wait on the Sons of Aaron for the service of the House of The LORD, in the courts and in the chambers, and in the purifying of all Holy Things, and the work of the service of the House of GOD: both for the shew-bread, and for the fine flour for meat-offering, and for the unleavened cakes, and for that which is baked in the pan, and for that which is fried, and for all manner of measure and size: and to stand every morning to thank and praise The LORD, and likewise at even: and to offer all Burnt-Sacrifices unto The LORD in the Sabbaths, in the new moons, and on the set feasts, by number, according to the order commanded unto them, continually before The LORD: and that they should keep the charge of the Tabernacle of the Congregation, and the charge of the Holy Place, and the charge of the Sons of Aaron, their Brethren, in the service of the House of The LORD. Now these are the divisions of the Sons of Aaron. The Sons of Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and Eleazar and Ithamar: but Nadab and Abihu died before their Father, and had no Children: therefore Eleazar and Ithamar executed the Priests' office. And David distributed them, both Zadok of the Sons of Eleazar, and Ahimelech of the Sons of Ithamar, according to their offices in their service. And there were more chief Men found of the Sons of Eleazar than of the Sons of Ithamar: and thus were they divided. Among the Sons of Eleazar there were sixteen chief Men of the House of their Fathers, and eight among the Sons of Ithamar according to the House of their Fathers. Thus were they divided by lot, one sort with another: for the Governors of the Sanctuary, and Governors of the House of GOD, were of the Sons of Eleazar, and of the Sons of Ithamar. And Shemaiah, the Son of Nethaneel the Scribe, one of the Levites, wrote them before the King, and the Princes, and Zadok the Priest, and Ahimelech, the Son of Abiathar, and before the Chief of the Fathers of the Priests and Levites: one principal Household being taken for Eleazar, and one taken for Ithamar. Now the first lot came forth to Jehoiarib, the second to Jedaiah, the third to Harim, the fourth to Seorim, the fifth to Malchijah, the sixth to Mijamin, the seventh to Hakkoz, the eighth to Abijah, the ninth to Jeshuah, the tenth to Shecaniah, the eleventh to Eliashib, the twelfth to Jakim, the thirteenth to Huppah, the fourteenth to Jeshebeab, the fifteenth to Bilgah, the sixteenth to Immer, the seventeenth to Hezir, the eighteenth to Aphses, the nineteenth to Pethahiah, the twentieth to Jehzekel, the one and twentieth to Jachin, the two and twentieth to Gamul, the three and twentieth to Delaiah, the four and twentieth to Maaziah. These were the orderings of them in their services to come into the House of The LORD, according to their manner, under Aaron, their Father, as The LORD GOD of Israel had Commanded him."—1 Chron. xxiii, and xxiv, 1 to 19.*

The appointment by David of Solomon as his Successor, will be more particularly noticed hereafter: here, however, it may be observed, that it was in conformity with The DIVINE Direction, and was the best atonement he could make for the injustice he had done towards the first Husband of Solomon's Mother. In the continuation of the extract from the narrative of this part of David's History, we are called upon to notice, and cannot but admire, the exemplary judgment, prudence, piety, and humanity exercised by him in the

constitution and regulation of what so essentially administered to the honourable and becoming worship of GOD, in the election and appointment of the various Officers, who were as Public Functionaries to take part in it: and the mode of such selection was the most happily chosen to prevent jealousies and disagreements amongst themselves; for, though it is the highest privilege, that can be designated to any One, to speak his MAKER'S praise, and especially when *Appointed* to teach Men so, it, alas, is but too indisputably true that, owing to the perverseness and depravity of the Human heart, and the influence of spiritual pride upon the mind, Many, who have said "LORD! LORD!" and have even prophesied in That Name, will still come short of the Kingdom of GOD. The vast powers of the mind of David are the lot of few; but the dedication of all his faculties, both of mind and body, to the Glory and Honour of GOD, is a conduct highly worthy, as it is universally capable, of imitation. Great as a General, a Judge, and a King, every branch of science seems also to have been familiar to him. Even in the lighter accomplishments he forgot not The LORD, Who Made and Upheld him; but praised Him in the dance, playing also on instruments of music, and which, though his hands held the reins of Government, they were employed to make, or his mind to direct the making; and we should additionally honour the memory of him, who thus consecrated to the Service of GOD his handy works, as well as his mental powers. As did our DIVINE MASTER, we find David, in the spirit of an active and well-directed piety, appointing the outgoings of the morning and evening to praise Him, Who Made the Light and Formed the Darkness. And though enjoining the performance of DIVINE SERVICE at those periods of each day, David superadded a confirmation of the Mosaic Ritual for the observance of Public Worship on other particular occasions.

“And the rest of the Sons of Levi were these; of the Sons of Amram; Shubael: of the Sons of Shubael; Jehdeiah. Concerning Rehabiah: of the Sons of Rehabiah; the first was Isshiah: of the Izharites; Shelomoth: of the Sons of Shelomoth; Jahath. And the Sons of Hebron, Jeriah, the first, Amariah, the second, Jahaziel, the third, Jekamean, the fourth. Of the Sons of Uzziel; Michah: of the Sons of Michah; Shamir. The Brother of Michah was Isshiah: of the Sons of Isshiah; Zechariah. The Sons of Merari were Mahli and Mushi: the Sons of Jaaziah; Beno. The Sons of Merari by Jaaziah; Beno, and Shoham, and Zaccur, and Ibri. Of Mahli came Eleazar, who had no Sons. Concerning Kish: the Son of Kish was Jerahmeel. The Sons also of Mushi; Mahli, and Eder, and Jerimoth. These were the Sons of the Levites after the House of their Fathers. These likewise cast lots over against their Brethren, the Sons of Aaron, in the presence of David the King, and Zadok, and Ahimelech, and the Chief of the Fathers of the Priests and Levites, even the principal Fathers over against their younger Brethren.”—1 Chron. xxiv, 20 to 31.

David's care to observe the most satisfactory mode of election amongst the admissively qualified Candidates for Offices in the Church of GOD we see here continued, and his personal attendance we find given to attach consequence to the appointments, and to ensure fair and impartial dealing in the drawing the lots; thereby holding out to us a salutary example that in the execution of an important trust (and what can be more important than the Service and Honour of GOD?) we should not shrink from personal exertion, or rely too much on a confidence in Others.

“Moreover David and the Captains of the Host separated to the service of the Sons of Asaph, and of Heman, and of Jeduthun, who should prophesy with harps, with psalteries, and with cymbals: and the number of the Workmen according to their service was, of the Sons of Asaph; Zaccur, and Joseph, and Nathaniah, and Asarelah, the Sons of Asaph under the hands of Asaph, which prophesied accord-

g to the order of the King. Of Jeduthun: the Sons of Jeduthun; Gedaliah, and Zeri, and Jeshaiah, Hashabiah, and Mattithiah, six, under the hands of their father Jeduthun, who prophesied with a harp, to give thanks and to praise The LORD. Of Heman: the Sons of Heman; Bukkiah, Mattaniah, Uzziel, Shebuel, and Jerimoth, Hananiah, Hanani, Eliathah, Giddalti, and Romamti-ezer, Joshbekashah, Mallothi, Hothir, and Mahazioth: All these were the Sons of Heman the King's Seer in the Words of GOD, to lift up the horn. And GOD Gave to Heman fourteen Sons and three Daughters. All these were under the hands of their father for song in the House of The LORD, with cymbals, psalteries and harps, or the Service of the House of GOD, according to the King's order to Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman. So the number of them, with their Brethren that were instructed in the Songs of The LORD, even All that were cunning, was two hundred fourscore and eight. And they cast lots, ward against ward, as well the wall as the great, the Teacher as the Scholar. Now the first lot came forth for Asaph to Joseph: the second to Gedaliah, who with his Brethren and Sons were twelve: the third to Zaccur, he, his Sons, and his Brethren, were twelve: the fourth to Izri, he, his Sons, and his Brethren, were twelve: the fifth to Nethaniah, he, his Sons, and his Brethren, were twelve: The sixth to Bukkiah, he, his Sons, and his Brethren, were twelve: the seventh to Jesharelah, he, his Sons, and his Brethren, were twelve: the eighth to Jeshaiah, he, his Sons, and his Brethren, were twelve: the ninth to Mattaniah, he, his Sons, and his Brethren, were twelve: the tenth to Shimei, he, his Sons, and his Brethren, were twelve: the eleventh to Azareel, he, his Sons, and his Brethren, were twelve: the twelfth to Hashabiah, he, his Sons, and his Brethren, were twelve: the thirteenth to Shubael, he, his Sons, and his Brethren, were twelve: the fourteenth to Mattithiah, he, his Sons, and his Brethren, were twelve: the fifteenth to Jeremoth, he, his Sons, and his Brethren, were twelve: the sixteenth to Hananiah, he, his Sons, and his Brethren, were twelve: the seventeenth to Joshbekashah, he, his Sons, and his Brethren, were twelve: the eighteenth to Hanani, he, his Sons, and his Brethren, were twelve: the nineteenth to Mallothi, he, his Sons, and his Brethren, were twelve: the twentieth to Eliathah, he, his Sons, and his Brethren, were twelve: the one and twentieth to Hothir, he, his Sons, and his Brethren, were twelve: the two and twentieth to Giddalti, he, his Sons, and his Brethren, were twelve: the three and twentieth to Mahazioth, he, his Sons, and his Brethren, were twelve: the four and twentieth to Romamti-ezer, he, his Sons, and his Brethren, were twelve."—1 Chron. xxv.

The peculiar structure of the Jewish instruments of music is, probably, at this day, not very accurately known: the harp, so peculiarly adapted as an accompaniment to the voice, and therefore so judiciously chosen, being also the instrument on which David himself so admirably performed, and which is ranked foremost in the order, varied but little perhaps, if at all, as far as effect was concerned, from that in present use: a number of these played with the skill of a Master, and varied in parts, would awaken a fire in the bosom of piety, little distant from our present ideas of Celestial Harmony; whilst the Vocal Band, with its various but accordant powers, would heighten as well as emulate, its effect: the psaltery was probably an instrument of a smaller kind resembling more either the lyre or lute, and calculated to express the higher and shriller tones: of the symbols there is a distinction sometimes found in Scripture, one being called the loud cymbals; whether their construction might be the same as those now in use, may be questioned, probably their tones might be softer and more silvery. But with reference to the character of David, we should not, on this occasion, fail to admire the excellent arrangement adopted by him to promote the Glory of GOD, by thus enlisting one of the most powerful influences over the passions of our nature into His Service; and what encouragement does such an example of a

King afford to every One to direct every bodily as well as intellectual faculty to the same laudable and wise end; since 'Whosoever honoureth GOD, will GOD Honour;' and Heavenly Music, as well as Heavenly Love, will be his Portion for ever and ever. The occupation of Heman in instructing all his numerous Children in sacred music, to constitute the leading Choir in the celebration of part of Divine Service, it is even delightful to contemplate; and if this were the primary object of musical instruction in this our day, how more than excusable would be its so general prevalence!

△ "Concerning the divisions of the Porters: of the Korhites was Meshelemiah the Son of Kore, of the Sons of Asaph. And the Sons of Meshelemiah were, Zechariah the firstborn, Jedaiel the second, Zebadiah the third, Jathniel the fourth, Elam the fifth, Jehohanan the sixth, Elioenai the seventh. Moreover the Sons of Obed-edom were, Shemaiah the firstborn, Jehozabad the second, Joah the third, and Sacar the fourth, and Nethaneel the fifth, Ammiel the sixth, Issachar the seventh, Peulthai the eighth: for GOD Blessed him. Also unto Shemaiah his Son were Sons born, that ruled throughout the House of their Father: for they were mighty Men of valour. The Sons of Shemaiah; Othni, and Rephael, and Obed, Elzabad, whose Brethren were strong Men, Elihu, and Semachiah. All these of the Sons of Obed-edom: they and their Sons and their Brethren, able Men for strength for the service, were threescore and two of Obed-edom. And Meshelemiah had Sons and Brethren, strong Men, eighteen. Also Hosah, of the Children of Merari, had Sons; Simri the chief, (for though he was not the firstborn, yet his Father made him the chief;) Hilkiah the second, Tebaliah the third, Zechariah the fourth: all the Sons and Brethren of Hosah were thirteen. Among these were the divisions of the Porters, even among the chief Men, having wards one against another, to minister in the House of The LORD. And they cast lots, as well the small as the great, according to the House of their Fathers, for every gate. And the lot eastward fell to Shelemiah. Then for Zechariah his Son, a wise Counsellor, they cast lots; and his lot come out northward. To Obed-edom southward; and to his Sons the house of (in the margin, Heb. gatherings) Asuphim. To Asuphim and Hosah the lot came forth westward, with the gate Shallecheth, by the causeway of the going up, ward against ward. Eastward were six Levites, northward four a day, southward four a day, and toward Asuphim two and two. At Parbar westward, four at the causeway, and two at Parbar. These are the divisions of the Porters among the Sons of Kore, and among the Sons of Merari. And of the Levites, Ahijah was over the treasures of the House of GOD, and over the treasures of the dedicated Things. As concerning the Sons of Laadan; the Sons of the Gershonite Laadan, chief Fathers, even of Laadan the Gershonite, were Jehieli. The Sons of Jehieli; Zetham, and Joel his Brother, which were over the treasures of the House of The LORD. Of the Amramites, and the Izharites, the Hebronites, and the Uzzielites: And Shebuel the Son of Gershom, the Son of Moses, was Ruler of the treasures. And his Brethren by Eliezer; Rehabiah his Son, and Jeshaiah his Son, and Joram his Son, and Zichri his Son, and Shelomith his Son: which Shelomith and his Brethren were over all the treasures of the dedicated Things, which David the King, and the chief Fathers, the Captains over Thousands and Hundreds, and the Captains of the Host had dedicated. Out of the spoils won in battles did they dedicate to maintain the House of The LORD. And all that Samuel the Seer, and Saul the Son of Kish, and Abner the Son of Ner, and Joab the Son of Zeruiah, had dedicated; and whosoever had dedicated any thing, it was under the hand of Shelomith, and of his Brethren."—1 Chron. xxvi, 1 to 28.

From the prosperity Visited upon Obed-edom as the temporary Guardian of the Sacred Ark of The DIVINE Covenant with The LORD'S People Israel, it might have been feared that he would have been puffed up with Spiritual pride, and

not have stooped, at the bidding of David, to fill himself, and to dedicate the Offspring of his loins to fill the apparently menial situation of Porters, though in the Holy Temple. But humility is inseparable from true piety, and What David's heart theoretically, but no doubt sincerely, proclaimed, That Obed-edom practically illustrated, "*I had rather be a Door-Keeper in the House of The LORD, than to dwell in the Tents of Wickedness.*" The dedication by Warriors of the spoils of their valour, is another fruitful source of exemplary doctrine. What a great lesson does it teach of the uses of Victory! and how would such a determination lessen the ferocity of war! Indeed, since by looking to the end we most effectually guard against doing amiss, the very entrance upon war, but on principles of the most indispensable self-defence, would be avoided; for as the Favour of The LORD would be the Crown of Victory, for Which we should most strenuously fight, our hearts would thereby be guarded against those ferocious passions, which, shutting out good-will towards Man, most effectually war against the Glory of GOD. If silver and gold, as the fruit of victory in war, when offered in the spirit of piety, be Acceptable to GOD, as acknowledging Him to be *The LORD of Hosts and The GOD of Armies, and that His is both the Silver and the Gold*, how much more Acceptable must be that Spirit of devotedness, which dedicates the fruits of industry or the accession of fortune, primarily and principally to the Promotion of the Kingdom of CHRIST in the hearts and understandings of our Fellow-Creatures, by spreading the knowledge and exemplifying the Principles of the Law of CHRIST.

"*Of the Izharites, Chenaniah and his Sons were for the outward business over Israel, for Officers and Judges. And of the Hebronites, Hashabiah and his Brethren Men of valour, a thousand and seven hundred, were Officers among them of Israel on this side Jordan westward in all the Business of The LORD, and in the service of the King. Among the Hebronites was Jerijah the Chief, even among the Hebronites, according to the Generations of his Fathers. In the fortieth year of the reign of David, they were sought for, and there were found among them mighty Men of valour at Jazer of Gilead. And his Brethren, Men of valour, were two thousand and seven hundred chief Fathers, whom King David made Rulers over the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half Tribe of Manasseh, for every Matter Pertaining to GOD, and affairs of the King.*"—1 Chron. xxvi, 29 to 32.

We have here further proof of the considerateness and wisdom of David: every department of Government, both civil and ecclesiastical, is filled with the like appropriate regard to the Honour of GOD: David knew that it is by Him that Kings reign and Princes decree justice, and he wisely ordained such an appointment and distribution of Officers as should call down on both King and Country the distinguishing Favour of HEAVEN, thus encircling his own Throne with that Glory, that fadeth not away, but is Eternal in the Records of HEAVEN.

"*Now the Children of Israel after their number, to wit, the chief Fathers, and Captains of thousands and hundreds, and their Officers, that served the King in any matter of the Courses, which came in and went out month by month throughout all the months of the year, of every Course were twenty and four thousand. Over the first Course for the first month was Jashobeam, the Son of Zabdiel: and in his Course were twenty and four thousand. Of the Children of Perez was the chief of all the Captains of the Host for the first month. And over the Course of the second month was Dodai, an Aholite, and of his Course was Mikloth also the Ruler: in his Course likewise were twenty and four thousand. The third Captain of the Host for the third month was Benaiah, the Son of Jehoiada, a chief Priest: and in his Course were twenty and four thousand. This is that Benaiah, who was mighty among the Thirty and above the Thirty; and in his Course was Ammizabad his Son. The fourth Captain for the fourth month was Asahel, the Brother of Joab,*



and Zebadiah his Son after him : and in his Course were twenty and four thousand. The fifth Captain for the fifth month was Shambhuth, the Izrahite : and in his Course were twenty and four thousand. The sixth Captain for the sixth month was Ira the Son of Ikkes, the Tekoite : and in his Course were twenty and four thousand. The seventh Captain for the seventh month was Helez, the Pelonite, of the Children of Ephraim : and in his Course were twenty and four thousand. The eighth Captain for the eighth month was Sibbecai, the Hushathite, of the Zarhites : and in his Course were twenty and four thousand. The ninth Captain for the ninth month was Abiezer, the Anetothite, of the Benjamites : and in his Course were twenty and four thousand. The tenth Captain for the tenth month was Maharai, the Netophathite, of the Zarhites : and in his Course were twenty and four thousand. The eleventh Captain for the eleventh month was Benaiah, the Pirathonite, of the Children of Ephraim : and in his Course were twenty and four thousand. The twelfth Captain for the twelfth month was Heldai, the Netophathite, of Othniel : and in his Course were twenty and four thousand. Furthermore over the Tribes of Israel : the Ruler of the Reubenites was Eliezer, the Son of Zichri : of the Simeonites, Shephatiah, the Son of Maachah : of the Levites, Hashabiah, the Son of Kemuel : of the Aaronites, Zadok : of Judah, Elihu, One of the Brethren of David : of Issachar, Omri the Son of Michael : of Zebulun, Ishmaiah, the Son of Obadiah : of Naphtali, Jerimoth, the Son of Azriel : of the Children of Ephraim, Hoshea, the Son of Azaziah : of the half Tribe of Manasseh, Joel, the Son of Pedaiiah : of the half Tribe of Manasseh in Gilead, Iddo, the Son of Zechariah : of Benjamin, Jaasiel, the Son of Abner : of Dan, Azareel, the Son of Jeroham. These were the Princes of the Tribes of Israel. But David took not the number of them from twenty years old and under ; because The LORD had Said, 'He would Increase Israel like to the Stars of the Heavens.' Joab, the Son of Zeruiah, began to number, but he finished not, because there fell Wrath for it against Israel ; neither was the number put in the account of the Chronicles of King David. And over the King's treasures was Azmaveth, the Son of Adiel : and over the storehouses in the fields, in the Cities, and in the Villages, and in the Castles, was Jehonathan, the Son of Uzziab : and over them that did the work of the field for tillage of the ground was Ezri, the Son of Chelub : and over the vineyards was Shimei, the Ramathite : over the increase of the vineyards for the wine cellars was Zabdi, the Shiphmite : and over the olive trees and the sycamore trees, that were in the low plains, was Baal-hanan, the Gederite : and over the cellars of oil was Joash : and over the herds that fed in Sharon, was Shitrai, the Sharonite : and over the herds that were in the valleys was Shaphat, the Son of Adlai : over the camels also was Obil, the Ishmaelite : and over the asses was Jehdeiah, the Meronothite : and over the flocks was Jaziz, the Hagerite. All these were the Rulers of the substance which was King David's. Also Jonathan, David's Uncle, was a Counsellor, a wise Man, and a Scribe : and Jehiel, the Son of Hachmoni, was with the King's Sons : And Ahithophel was the King's Counsellor : and Hushai, the Archite, was the King's Companion : And after Ahithophel was Jehoiada, the Son of Benaiah, and Abiathar : and the General of the King's Army was Joab."—1 Chron. xxvii.

The principle of the Israelitish Army in a period of peace, as regulated by the polity of King David, seems to have been that of a Militia, embodied in monthly divisions, drawn from the different Provinces of his Kingdom ; and thus, whilst all were trained to arms, and available in a period of war, too many were not, at the same time, taken out from the useful labours of a Community ; a system alike creditable to the character of David, both as a Statesman and a General. Over every Tribe was also placed a Governor, forming, as it were, Planets round the Solar System of a Regal Government : but amidst so much of excellence as emanated from the Centre (under GOD) of so beautiful a Sphere.

the fidelity of Sacred History permits not its defects to be unnoticed. Transcendant as were the talents, and deeply-rooted as was the piety of David, yet was he not without sin; but distrustful at one time of The LORD, and confiding in the arm of flesh, in numbering his People, without making Him his Strength, Whose Alone it is to Save by Many or by Few, he erred, and that error is here again proclaimed as a warning voice to us to beware that we do not in like manner offend. In the internal regulation of the public revenue, of the crown lands, of the stock, and produce of the Royal Domains, and of the contributions, which were doubtless made in kind, for the support of the Government, the most exemplary order may be presumed to have prevailed; for the King seems to have appointed over each department a Head, and to have called in to his aid as Counsellors the wisest of his Subjects, and to have made the choice of the Commander in chief of his Army with equal discernment.

*"And David assembled all the Princes of Israel, the Princes of the Tribes, and the Captains of the Companies, that ministered to the King by course, and the Captains over the Thousands, and Captains over the Hundreds, and the Stewards over all the substance and possession of the King, and of his Sons, with the Officers, and with the mighty Men, and with all the valiant Men, unto Jerusalem. Then David the King stood up upon his feet, and said, 'Hear me, my Brethren, and my People! As for me, I had in mine heart to build an House of Rest for the Ark of the Covenant of The LORD, and for the Footstool of our GOD, and had made ready for the Building: but GOD Said unto me, 'Thou shalt not build an House for My Name, because thou hast been a Man of war, and hast shed blood.' Howbeit, The LORD GOD of Israel Chose me before all the House of my Father to be King over Israel for ever: for He hath Chosen Judah to be the Ruler; and of the House of Judah, the House of my Father; and among the Sons of my Father He Liked me to Make me King over all Israel: and of all my Sons, (for The LORD hath Given me many Sons,) He hath Chosen Solomon, my Son, to sit upon the throne of the Kingdom of The LORD over Israel. And He Said unto me, 'Solomon, thy Son, he shall build My House and My Courts: for I have Chosen him to be My Son, and I will be his FATHER. Moreover I will Establish his Kingdom for ever; if he be constant to do My Commandments and My Judgments, as at this day.' Now, therefore, in the sight of all Israel the Congregation of The LORD, and in the Audience of our GOD, keep and seek for All the Commandments of The LORD, your GOD: that ye may possess this good Land, and leave it for an Inheritance for your Children after you for ever!"*—1 Chron. xxviii, 1 to 8.

Not in the secrecy of chamber retirement, not with the sudden and undeclared mandate of a Despot, did David act; but, collecting around him all the Dignitaries of his Kingdom, amidst this Constellation of every quality and influence, that was revered and respected throughout his Dominion, he proclaims the Dignity and MAJESTY of GOD; himself rising from a throne, in the contemplation of all around him more resplendent with the true ornaments of Majesty, than that of any other Potentate upon Earth, he yet admits that, notwithstanding his mind had devised the seemingly liberal and reverential scheme of erecting a Temple to The LORD, he had nevertheless forborne to complete it, contenting himself with only making preparations: and, though surpassing all experience in the annals of the World were the boldness and grandeur of the conception, yet in all the humility, that language could characterise, does he speak of the premeditated work even in its anticipated accomplishment,—*"as a Footstool of our GOD."* It is true that the whole Earth is The LORD'S, and that the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain Him; for indeed He is every where Present, and is Himself the Fulness of the Excellence of all Things; and the Temple of The LORD is a Temple not made with hands, but is Eternal in the

Heavens. Still was the most exemplary humbleness of mind (Humanly speaking) manifested by David in the term he used, as indicative of the Glory of The LORD Transcending far the tributary honour that the utmost of Human effort could pay to Him. In the further continuance of this august address of the King to the Noblest of his Subjects, we find him, in effect, publishing, as it were, a Prophecy of the Gospel of Peace; that GOD is a GOD of Peace, and Where He Dwelleth, There assuredly Abideth Peace. *David had been a Man of war, and had shed blood*; not, therefore, to him, but to a Minister of Peace belonged the acceptable Office of building a House to The LORD, which should be a Type of That Temple of Holiness, Which was Constituted by the Body of CHRIST, the PRINCE of Peace. But not to sink his own character too low in the estimation of the People, he reminds them of the especial Interposition of PROVIDENCE in the Selection of his Tribe, his Family, himself, and his Son Solomon, to be the Heralds and Forerunners of Him, in Whom all the Nations and Families of the Earth were to be Blessed: for beyond the temporal Solomon it seems likely that David looked, though as through a glass darkly, and that he had respect to That MEMBER of the Tribe of Judah, and of the Lineage of David, of Whose KINGDOM there should be no end, even JESUS, The CHRIST. But the Benefit to be reaped from This Glorious Privilege by the People of Israel, David takes, most wisely and Parentally, this occasion to admonish them, would entirely depend on their fidelity to the Cause of GOD, and to the true maintenance of His Glory by a submission to His Will and an observance of His Laws; and this he proclaims without reserve, and in the Majesty and simplicity of both King and Priest, to all his People. For, though Blessed indeed are those People, whom The LORD doth Choose, yet only to Such as have zeal towards Him, emanating from true piety and fervent love, and who study to advance His KINGDOM by the purity of their Lives and conversation, and by a steadfast observance of His Will, and an unfeigned sorrow at any departure from It, doth He Promise to be A Refuge from the storm, A Shadow from the heat, when the blasts of the terrible Ones are abroad, and when the Powers of Earth and of Heaven are Shaken by the Judgment of OMNIPOTENCE.

*"And thou, Solomon, my Son, know thou The GOD of thy Father; and serve Him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind! for The LORD Searcheth all hearts, and Understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek Him, He will be Found of thee: but if thou forsake Him, He will Cast thee off for ever. Take heed now! for The LORD hath Chosen thee to build an House for the Sanctuary: be strong, and do it!"—1 Chron. xxviii, 9 10.*

How beautiful, how valuable a Sermon is here comprehensively, though concisely delivered; how universally applicable is its admonition, though naturally the interest in it is enhanced, when considering the excellent character of the Preacher, and the near and dear connection between him and the Individual to whom it was originally addressed; from a Father to a Son; a King to his Subject; the Occupier of a throne to him, who was selected to succeed to it; there could be no motive for insincerity: the words of soberness and truth were here spoken forth. The GOD of David, Whom Solomon was thus by his Father David, (in the prospect of being speedily called to his judgment,) invited to serve, and to serve not with mere outward profession and ceremony, but *with a perfect heart and with a willing mind*, is The Same GOD yesterday, to-day, and for ever; and still doth He Continue to Search all hearts, and to Understand all the imaginations of the thoughts.

△ *"Then David gave to Solomon, his Son, the pattern of the porch, and of the houses thereof, and of the treasures thereof, and of the upper chambers thereof, and*

of the inner parlours thereof, and of the place of the Mercy Seat; and the pattern of all that he had by The SPIRIT of the Courts of the House of The LORD, and of all the chambers round about, of the treasuries of the House of GOD, and of the treasuries of the dedicated things: also for the Courses of the Priests and the Levites, and for all the work of the Service of the House of The LORD, and for all the vessels of Service in the House of The LORD. He gave of gold by weight, for things of gold, for all instruments of all manner of service: silver also for all instruments of silver by weight, for all instruments of every kind of service: even the weight for the candlesticks of gold, and for their lamps of gold, by weight for every candlestick, and for the lamps thereof: and for the candlesticks of silver by weight, both for the candlestick and also for the lamps thereof, according to the use of every candlestick. And by weight he gave gold for the tables of shew-bread, for every table; and likewise silver for the tables of silver: also pure gold for the flesh-hooks, and the bowls and the cups: and for the golden basons he gave gold by weight for every bason: and likewise silver by weight for every bason of silver: and for the Altar of Incense refined gold by weight: and gold for the pattern of the chariot of the Cherubims, that spread out their wings, and covered the Ark of the Covenant of The LORD. 'All this,' said David, 'The LORD Made me understand in writing by His Hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern.'" —1 Chron. xxviii, 11 to 19.

All Spiritual Wisdom Cometh from On HIGH. This great and important Truth, full of encouragement to the Meek and Lowly of heart, however humiliating to the haughty look of Pride, David emphatically and exemplarily illustrates, by proclaiming that the whole Design for the Temple and its Services, with all the variety of implements and ornaments intended for its use, was Communicated to him by Revelation from The HOLY SPIRIT. It is The SPIRIT of GOD, Which Imparteth unto the Soul of Man the understanding heart, and Teacheth us how we may please GOD. But how Few have the candour or courage to acknowledge, as David did, The SOURCE, from Whence understanding is Enlightened, ingenuitly Directed or Assisted, and zeal made Profitable in the Cause of GOD!

"And David said to Solomon, his Son, 'Be strong and of good courage, and do it; fear not, nor be dismayed! for The LORD GOD, even my GOD, will be with thee: He will not Fail thee, nor Forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the work for the Service of the House of The LORD. And, behold, the Courses of the Priests and the Levites, even they shall be with thee for all the Service of the House of GOD: and there shall be with thee for all manner of workmanship, every willing skilful Man, for any manner of service: also the Princes and all the People will be wholly at thy commandment.'" —1 Chron. xxviii, 20, 21.

Steadfastness in faith is the great doctrine here inculcated, a doctrine which One of the mightiest and most valiant Commanders and Kings throughout history, deemed most necessary to instil into the mind of his chosen Son and Successor; for to them, that believe, all things are possible. Nothing which has the Honour of GOD for its object, should be deemed too difficult or insurmountable. Whatever The LORD hath Appointed us to, that should we assume courage to fulfil, for He is our Strength and our Shield, and will Become our exceeding Great Reward if we persevere in the work, which in His Service our hand findeth to do. GOD once and again Failed David, though the Man after His Own Heart, and for the time Forsook him; but it was because David had failed in his duty towards his GOD, and had forsaken the Paths of His Commandments. But never hath The LORD Forsaken him, who did steadfastly put his trust in Him, and kept His Laws in his heart. Our fear should be only of Him, Who hath Power over both Soul and body, and the loss of Whose Favour

will cost us an Eternity of happiness. But to our great consolation we are assured, that if we diligently seek The LORD, He will be Found by us; and the wise Son of Sirach hath confirmed the truth by a reference to the history of the World. "Look to the Generations of Old, and see! Did ever Any trust in The LORD and was Confounded? or did Any abide in His fear, and was Forsaken? or whom did He ever Despise, that called upon Him?"

△ "Furthermore David the King said unto all the Congregation, 'Solomon, my Son, whom alone GOD hath Chosen, is yet young and tender; and the work is great: for the Palace is not for Man, but for The LORD GOD. Now I have prepared with all my might for the House of my GOD, the gold for things to be made of gold, and the silver for things of silver, and the brass for things of brass, the iron for things of iron, and wood for things of wood: onyx stones, and stones to be set, glistering stones, and of divers colours, and all manner of precious stones, and marble stones in abundance. Moreover, because I have set my affection to the House of my GOD, I have of mine own proper good, of gold and silver, which I have given to the House of my GOD, over and above all that I have prepared for the Holy House, even three thousand talents of gold, of the gold of Ophir, and seven thousand talents of refined silver, to overlay the walls of the Houses withal: the gold for things of gold, and the silver for things of silver, and for all manner of work to be made by the hands of Artificers. And who then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto The LORD?' Then the Chief of the Fathers and Princes of the Tribes of Israel, and the Captains of Thousands and of Hundreds, with the Rulers of the King's work, offered willingly; and gave for the Service of the House of GOD of gold five thousand talents and ten thousand drams, and of silver ten thousand talents, and of brass eighteen thousand talents, and one hundred thousand talents of iron. And they, with whom precious stones were found, gave them to the treasure of the House of The LORD, by the hand of Jehiel, the Gershonite. Then the People rejoiced, for that they offered willingly, because with perfect heart they offered willingly to The LORD: and David the King also rejoiced with great joy." —1 Chron. xxix, 1 to 9.

HE, That Formed the Earth, might have Raised upon it a Temple Worthy His worship, without needing the labour of Man, or the free-will offering of his hands for its accomplishment; but in His Dealings with Man, The ALMIGHTY usually Executes His Gracious Designs through the medium of Human Agency. HE Put into the heart of David to prepare the materials for the formation of a Temple, and He specially Designated Solomon, Selected singly from amongst the numerous Offspring of David, to finish the hallowed work. The collection and dedication of so much wealth; the devotion of so much consideration, as directed the design; and the employment of his influence to superinduce in Others such sacrifices as would further his holy purpose, were employments that dignified, in a peculiar and pre-eminent degree, the closing scenes of David's eventful but glorious reign. To a mind less confident in the Providence of GOD, the hope of so great an undertaking, (from the fulfilment of which he was himself withheld,) being brought to a successful termination by a Man, of years so tender, as were then the years of Solomon, (he then being not more than eighteen, according to general calculation,) might have been too remote to be fondly and fervently indulged: but David knew that with GOD All Things are Possible to them, that trust in Him; and, therefore, with the fullest confidence he affirmatively answered himself the question, "*Hath GOD Said, and shall He not Do it?*" Still not looking unnecessarily for Miracles, where natural means, under SPIRITUAL Guidance, would suffice, he prudently and Parentally, in the tone of a Patriarch as well as a King, calls on the Elders and Nobles of his Country to lend their efforts, and aid with their counsel his Divinely Appointed Successor

in the mighty work and labour of love, to which he was soon to be called. Nor, as desirous as he naturally would be for the glory of his Son's Kingdom to be extended, did David forget the higher honour that was due to That FATHER of his Son, Which is in Heaven, The KING of Kings and LORD of Lords; and specially, therefore, did he impress on Those, whose countenance he sought on his Son's behalf, that the House to be erected was not a Palace for Man, but a temple for The LORD; thereby, in effect, exhorting them to bring to the council minds zealously affected and suitably directed in so Good a Cause, and in so Great and Transcendant a Work. From the public treasury and from the spoils of conquest, David was not satisfied to derive the only sources of the wealth he dedicated to the Object he had in view; but in addition to these he opened, with an eager hand, his private coffers, and gave freely, because he had set his affection on the House of GOD. Thus did he, indeed, make to himself Friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, by giving worldly wealth, (the too frequent cause of so much bodily toil and Spiritual cost when perverted from its legitimate end,) its salutary direction. Rich as he was in temporal prosperity, his chiefest treasure was in the hope of Heaven, and, therefore, was his heart here also.

David's thus publicly detailing the sacrifices he had offered up to his GOD, it would be uncharitable to attribute to any other motive than a wish to spread the influence of his example among his Subjects, to induce them to go and do likewise. He had erred in numbering the Tribes of Israel, because it conveyed a distrust in the Promised Protection of them beneath the Shield of The ALMIGHTY; that error he had freely owned and fully repented of; to number, therefore, the wealth he allotted to the Service of That GOD, unless from the purest and most pious motive, and with a total absence of all impulse of ostentation, would have been to sin against conviction: no, his motive was to stimulate the wealthy Subjects of his Land to co-operate, as became them, in so exemplary a design, and to induce them, like him, to lay up their treasures in Heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where Thieves do not break through and steal; to consecrate their riches to the Service of That GOD, Who Giveth riches and wisdom. Nor was so pious an appeal ineffectual; but All, who had wherewithal to give, gave, and that too not grudgingly or of necessity, but as cheerful Givers, Such as The LORD Loveth; and even the Poorest gave of the tribute of their joy, an offering of a sweet-smelling savour, Acceptable unto The LORD; for He is no Respector of Persons, but Judgeth the heart, and Accepteth a gift according to what a Man hath, not Requiring from him that which he hath not. General was the joy, and largely did David partake of it—it was the joy of the heart; and thus alms and praise ascended, as the free-will offerings of pious Souls, to the Throne of Grace.

“Wherefore David blessed The LORD before all the Congregation; and David said, ‘Blessed be Thou, LORD GOD of Israel, our FATHER, for ever and ever! THINE, O LORD, is the Greatness, and the Power, and the Glory, and the Victory, and the MAJESTY: for All, That is in Heaven and in the Earth is Thine; Thine is the KINGDOM, O LORD, and Thou art Exalted as HEAD above All. Both Riches and Honour Come of Thee; and Thou Reignest over All: and in Thine Hand is Power and Might: and in Thine Hand it is to Make Great, and to Give Strength unto All! Now, therefore, our GOD, we thank Thee, and praise Thy Glorious Name. But who am I, and what is my People, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? For all Things Come of Thee, and of Thine Own have we given Thee: for we are Strangers before Thee and Sojourners, as were all our Fathers: our days on the Earth are as a Shadow, and there is none abiding. O LORD, our GOD, all this Store, that we have prepared to build Thee

*an House for Thine Holy Name, Cometh of Thine Hand and is all Thine Own. I know also, my GOD, that Thou Triest the heart, and hast Pleasure in Uprightness. As for me, in the uprightness of mine heart I have willingly offered all these things: and now have I seen with joy Thy People, which are present here, to offer willingly unto Thee. O LORD GOD of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, our Fathers, Keep This for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of Thy People, and Prepare their heart unto Thee! And Give unto Solomon, my Son, a perfect heart, to keep Thy Commandments, Thy Testimonies, and Thy Statutes, and to do all these things, and to build the Palace, for the which I have made provision.' And David said to all the Congregation, 'Now bless The LORD, your GOD!' And all the Congregation blessed The LORD GOD of their Fathers, and bowed down their heads, and worshipped The LORD, and the King. And they sacrificed Sacrifices unto The LORD, and offered Burnt-Offerings unto The LORD, on the morrow after that day, even a thousand bullocks, a thousand rams, and a thousand lambs, with their Drink-Offerings and Sacrifices in abundance, for all Israel: and did eat and drink before The LORD on that day with great gladness."—1 Chron. xxix, 10 to first part of 22.*

After a pious dedication by David and his People of a portion of their treasures in this life to the Service of The LORD; and the interchange of gratulation on such their sacred disposedness of heart, David breaks forth into a beautiful and sublime address of praise and prayer to The GOD of their common worship, opening with a benediction to Him, Who is The GOD of all worship, and Who was devoutly revered as Such by the Parent, from whom the Israelites in an especial degree sprung; for Abraham and Isaac had Descendants that were not of the common stock of the Israelites. Then contemplating the nature and attributes of The DEITY, he enlarges in a most dignified strain of eulogy, declaring JEHOVAH'S Omnipotence, and the Honour That awaits Him; admitting that all things, both in Nature and in Grace, are entirely His, or dependant on His Will; and proclaiming Glory to GOD in the Highest. Applying then These Great and Primary Truths to the peculiar Object of the Assembly, David, with equal truth and felicity, inculcates the lesson, unknown indeed to None, but so little practically illustrated, that the two leading Objects of Mankind's pursuits are wholly influenced by the Decrees of PROVIDENCE,—that He is virtually and in effect The Only SOURCE of Riches, The Only FOUNTAIN of Honour; and that Above all Principalities and Powers, even in Heavenly Places, is He Enthroned. To Him, therefore, doth David admonish that all gratitude should be paid, since from Him, both nationally and individually, Such Blessings as had been Showered down upon David and his People were received. Led by such consideration to the contemplation of the Dignity of The GIVER, and the comparative nothingness in worth of Those He had so peculiarly Endowed with His Benefits, David, in all the humility inseparable from the most fervent piety, asks, "*But who am I, and what is my People, that we should be able* (or as the margin hath it, "obtain strength,") *to offer so willingly after this sort?"* attributing to the Gracious and Bountiful Dispensation of PROVIDENCE their having not only the *power* but the *will* to do Him service. Nor can there well be conceived a more forcibly illustrated exposure of the folly of Human vanity and self-sufficiency, than (after so eventful a history and such peculiar exaltation of Rank and character,) this plain and unequivocal acknowledgment of David, that "*All Things Come of Thee, O GOD, and of Thine Own have we given Thee.*" Having thus passed on from praise to confession, and in that confession including, under a beautiful figure of poetry, the admission of the unstableness of our Nature, and the slender dependance on which every thing in this Life, and, indeed, life itself hang, saying, "*We are*

angers before Thee, and Sojourners, as were all our Fathers; our days on the Earth as a shadow, and there is none abiding," David next proceeds to the office prayer, and sues for that Grace, from which all Goodness Floweth, and that may Continue to Abound in his own and in his People's hearts, and in the arts of their Progeny from Generation to Generation, that they might continue 'avoured Nation whilst Time should last. This supplication David prefaced by acknowledgment, that The LORD, Whose Honour he was seeking, is a GOD of knowledge, and that all the deep things of the heart are open to His View; for surely nothing is hidden from His Sight, and every thought of the mind, never concealed from Fellow-Men, is at once imaged as in a mirror before GOD. But though The LORD *Knoweth All*, He *Loveth* only the Righteous. *"I know also, my GOD, that Thou Triest the heart, and hast Pleasure in rightness."* From whence David takes occasion to avow the purity of his life, as in perfect consonance with his profession, in the dedicatory offering had made, and proclaims the unfeigned joy with which he had witnessed a responding disposition in his People; thereby implying, at least, an admonition to them to search and try their hearts, since out of them proceed the issues of life: in furtherance of which object David thus solemnly and sagaciously prays, *"O LORD GOD of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, our Fathers, Keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of Thy People, and Prepare (or abolish) their heart unto thee! And Give unto Solomon, my Son, a perfect heart, keep Thy Commandments, Thy Testimonies, and Thy Statutes!"* First for the people of his affection, as a wise King regardeth the Subjects he rules over, and next for the Son of his choice, David, with equal tenderness of regard and secretion of judgment, asketh the truest Blessing that HEAVEN on Man can bestow, or Man from HEAVEN implore. He asketh not for honour, riches, power; for these, from their transitory nature, do not fill up the measure of our life, and have no connection with our noblest part, our Soul which is Immortal; but he asks that their hearts may be turned unto The LORD, and that they may like Him their Fear and Him their Trust; living in continual and reverential preparation for His Advent unto Judgment; and that they may serve Him truly in the days of their Lives; knowing that their labour shall not be in vain in The LORD. Such and in the same spirit should be our prayer for our Families, our kindred, and our Country; and to our own hearts should we lay the salutary and congenial unction of the Preacher: *"Keep thy heart diligently, and give not thy thoughts to evil!"* and to that end should we earnestly present to the Throne of Grace a prayer for Grace to practise what is preached.

Having closed his solemn appeal to Him, Who, though HIGH Above the heavens, Heareth prayer, David invokes the general thanksgiving of the People to their DIVINE BENEFactor; nor was the invocation made in vain, for He gave Glory to GOD, and marked with their admiration the prominent piety of the King. And this act of oral oblation was followed by voluntary offerings of Sacrifice, suited to the solemnity of the Occasion, and corresponding with the prescribed sanction of their sacred Law, shewing us, that good-will to Man is the legitimate offspring of genuine gratitude to GOD.

*"Now King David was old and stricken in years: and they covered him with clothes, but he gat no heat: wherefore his Servants said unto him, 'Let there be sought for my Lord the King a young Virgin (or a Damsel); and let her stand before the King; and let her cherish him, and let her lie in thy bosom, that my Lord the King may get heat!' So they sought for a fair Damsel throughout all the Coasts of Israel, and found Abishag, a Shunammite, and brought her to the King: and the Damsel was very fair, and cherished the King, and ministered to him: but the King knew her not."*—1 Kings i, 1 to 4. △



How fluctuating is the state of Man! and how equal in his important destinies are the Appointments of PROVIDENCE respecting him! The helplessness of Infancy and the feebleness of old Age are the lot of Rich as well as Poor, and no Man can save his life from the grave. He, who, ere attaining unto Manhood, had slain a lion and a bear, and had strength to wield the sword of a Giant, whom by his dexterity he slew; who, in his maturer years, had commanded Armies, conquered Kingdoms, and by his wisdom presided in the councils of the Elders; who by his valour acquired, and by his virtues adorned, a Throne; who from the piety of his heart was the Favourite of HEAVEN; and the beauty of whose holiness, as the sweet Psalmist of Israel, has been, from that day to this, held in the highest veneration, is here represented as the Victim of old age, without spirit and almost without life, a very wreck of Being; but in this weak and helpless state his virtues forbade that he should be forsaken either of GOD or Man or Woman either; the preservation of such a Life was held worthy of any sacrifice; and the bounds of Female delicacy were overleaped to contribute to the object. A Damsel of Shunem, belonging to the Tribe of Issachar, (Joshua xix, 18,) pre-eminent for personal attractions, but more estimable, perhaps, for the amiable qualities of her mind, consented to embosom her Royal Master, not in the lust of concupiscence, but from the hallowed dictate of filial and reverential love. Her warm heart shrunk not from the cold embrace; and from the pure impulse of loyalty, she administered unto the King all the charities of wedlock, without its wonted recompense. What lustre did such a voluntary sacrifice reflect back on him, to whom it was dedicated! Nor should the anxiety of the Servants to see their Royal Master solaced amidst his sufferings be overlooked; for their attachment is trumpet-tongued in a Master's praise.

△ *"Then Adonijah, the Son of Haggith, exalted himself, saying, 'I will be King.' and he prepared him chariots and horsemen, and fifty Men to run before him. And his Father had not displeased him at any time in saying, 'Why hast thou done so?' and he also was a very goodly Man; and his Mother bare him after Absalom. And he conferred with Joab, the Son of Zeruiah, and with Abiathar the Priest; and they, following Adonijah, helped him. But Zadok, the Priest, and Benaiah, the Son of Jehoiada, and Nathan the Prophet, and Shimei, and Rei, and the mighty Men, which belonged to David, were not with Adonijah. And Adonijah slew sheep and oxen and fat cattle by the stone of Zoheleth, which is by En-rogel, and called all his Brethren, the King's Sons, and all the Men of Judah, the King's Servants; but Nathan, the Prophet, and Benaiah, and the mighty Men, and Solomon his Brother, he called not. Wherefore Nathan spake unto Bath-sheba, the Mother of Solomon, saying, 'Hast thou not heard that Adonijah, the Son of Haggith, doth reign, and David, our Lord, knoweth it not? Now therefore come, let me, I pray thee, give thee counsel, that thou mayest save thine own Life, and the Life of thy Son Solomon. Go and get thee in unto King David, and say unto him, 'Didst not thou, my Lord, O King, swear unto thine Handmaid saying, 'Assuredly Solomon, thy Son, shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my Throne? why then doth Adonijah reign?' Behold, while thou yet talkest there with the King, I also will come in after thee, and confirm thy words.' And Bath-sheba went in unto the King into the chamber: and the King was very old; and Abishag, the Shunammite, ministered unto the King. And Bath-sheba bowed, and did obeisance unto the King. And the King said, 'What wouldest thou?' And she said unto him, 'My Lord, thou swarest by The LORD, thy GOD, unto thine Handmaid, saying, 'Assuredly Solomon, thy Son, shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my Throne.' And now, behold, Adonijah reigneth; and now, my Lord, the King, thou knowest it not: and he hath slain oxen and fat cattle and sheep in abundance, and hath called all the Sons of the*

ing, and Abiathar, the Priest, and Joab, the Captain of the Host: but Solomon, thy Servant, hath he not called. And thou, my Lord, O King, the eyes of all Israel are upon thee, that thou shouldest tell them, Who shall sit on the Throne of my Lord, the King after him. Otherwise it shall come to pass, when my Lord, the King, shall sleep with his Fathers, that I and my Son Solomon shall be counted offenders.' And, lo, while she yet talked with the King, Nathan, the Prophet, also came in: and they told the King, saying, 'Behold Nathan, the Prophet!' And when he was come in before the King, he bowed himself before the King with his face to the ground. And Nathan said, 'My Lord, O King, hast thou said, 'Adonijah shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my Throne?' For he is gone down this way, and hath slain oxen and fat cattle and sheep in abundance, and hath called all the King's Sons, and the Captains of the Host, and Abiathar, the Priest; and behold, they eat and drink before him, and say, 'GOD Save King Adonijah!' But I, even me, thy Servant, and Zadok, the Priest, and Benaiah, the Son of Jehoiada, and thy Servant Solomon, hath he not called. Is this thing done by my Lord, the King: and thou hast not shewed it unto thy Servant, 'Who should sit on the Throne of my Lord, the King, after him?' Then King David answered and said, 'Call me Bath-sheba!' And she came into the King's presence, and stood before the King. And the King sware, and said, 'As The LORD Liveth, That hath redeemed my Soul out of all distress, even as I sware unto thee by The LORD GOD of Israel, saying, 'Assuredly Solomon, thy Son, shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my Throne in my stead:' even so will I certainly do this day.' Then Bath-sheba bowed with her face to the earth, and did reverence to the King, and said, 'Let my Lord, King David, live for ever!'—1 Kings i, 5 to 31.

Amidst the common attendants of old Age, sickness and infirmity, David as yet visited with another trial of his faith, that of filial rebellion; but, faithful to the cause he had espoused, he was not backward to fulfil, in the last struggles of Life, the duty, to which his GOD had Appointed him. With him the revelation of the Will of GOD was but the Forerunner of Its observance: and of such primary and indispensable necessity was, in his estimation, obedience to the DIVINE Law, that no natural desire for ease, amidst the weariness of old age, nor anxiety for abstraction from secular care amidst the pangs even of dissolution, were sufficient to overcome his disposition to do the Will of his FATHER, Which was in Heaven, and with Whom he was contemplating a speedy Union in the perfection of Bliss, which made the willingness of the Spirit predominate over the weakness of an old and dying Man. Had the order of primogeniture prevailed, Adonijah would certainly have excluded his Brother Solomon. Indeed in the absence or ignorance of any avowed intention on the part of the King with respect to the Regal Succession, it is scarcely to be wondered at that so many of the People should have come into the measure of proclaiming Adonijah the Successor: and to support his pretensions he brought forward that, which blindeth the judgment, a bribe in his right hand. Even Joab, the Captain of the Host, who had exterminated without mercy and in defiance of the Royal edict the defenceless Absalom, the Brother of Adonijah, for his unnatural rebellion against his Father, countenances Adonijah, when David was all but dead; and all the King's Sons were Parties in the league, but Solomon, then a tender age. Almost singly opposed to this numerous and mighty Host, at a moment when the glass of the Royal Life was well nigh spent, and all idea of energetic measures proceeding from the King might be considered as visionary, stood the Prophet of The LORD: trusting faithfully in That OMNIPOTENCE, Which Ruleth over all the Kingdoms of the Earth, and, drawing his counsel from that Wisdom which is from Above, and which Bringeth to nought the machinations of evil Men, he was nothing daunted by the violence or strength of

the opposition. The expedient resorted to by Nathan, in order to press the subject by successive communication on the King's mind, was, probably, in regard to the advanced age of the Latter, and the consequent apprehended failure of his memory and feebleness of his mind; but the Mercies of his GOD still Lived in all the vividness of Their lovely colouring in the recollection of David, and in renewing his oath to Bath-sheba, in favour of their Son Solomon, he swore by That GOD, "*Who had Redeemed him out of all his distress;*" thus sealing, with the latest utterance of his lips, his consciousness of a Graciously Overruling PROVIDENCE; by Whom his Soul was Rescued from despair, and Crowned with the hope of a Glorious Immortality. In aid of such a Spiritual construction of the King's meaning, comes the prayer of the beloved Bath-sheba, "*Let my Lord, King David, live for ever!*" for the natural Life was visibly drawing to a speedy close, and the very object of her intercession was in the acknowledged contemplation of his natural Death. But to the eye of faith, the end of the natural Life is the beginning of a Spiritual one, which shall be without measure of days, and which will not only redeem the faithful Soul out of all its distress, but in which shall reign fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore. Into those Mansions of Blessedness and Peace it was that Bath-sheba virtually prayed that David's Life of Immortality might pass.

△ "*And King David said, 'Call me Zadok, the Priest, and Nathan, the Prophet, and Benaiah, the Son of Jehoiada!' And they came before the King. The King also said unto them, 'Take with you the Servants of your Lord, and cause Solomon, my Son, to ride upon mine own mule, and bring him down to Gihon: and let Zadok, the Priest, and Nathan, the Prophet, anoint him there King over Israel; and blow ye with the trumpet, and say, 'GOD Save King Solomon!' Then ye shall come up after him, that he may come and sit upon my Throne; for he shall be King in my stead; and I have appointed him to be Ruler over Israel and over Judah.'*" And Benaiah, the Son of Jehoiada, answered the King, and said, '*Amen! The LORD GOD of my Lord, the King, Say so too! As The LORD hath Been with my Lord, the King, even so Be He with Solomon, and Make his Throne Greater than the Throne of my Lord, King David!*"'—1 Kings i, 32 to 37.

The wisdom of David is conspicuous in this mode of checking the spirit of rebellion, that had gained such an ascendancy. No little attachment to the continuance of power interposed to frustrate, what he considered to be, the Express Appointment of his GOD: it was not as his Successor, that when Death had removed him from the Throne, David designated Solomon, but absolutely, and at once, appointed him to reign, during the remainder of David's life, in his stead. And not only did David in secret purpose the fulfilment of what he considered to be The DIVINE Will as to the Succession, but he expressly directed a Proclamation to be issued, attributing, in effect, this Substitution of King over the People of Israel to the Merciful Interposition of Israel's GOD; for the Ministers, selected to give effect to the ordinance he made, were directed to invoke the General Voice in prayer for The DIVINE Benediction on Solomon: "*GOD Save King Solomon!*" was to be in every mouth, and to reign as the predominant sentiment in every heart; thus testifying to the World, that it is by GOD'S Permission alone that Kings reign and that Princes decree justice; that vain is all sublunary power without Succour and Sanction from On HIGH; and that the Majesty of Empire is only Great when surrounded by That Light, which beautifieth the heart, and guideth the feet to Heaven. Such, indeed, should be the associating sentiments of every One, who uttereth the familiar phrase of "*GOD Save the King, or, Queen!*" It is, indeed, asking for Popular Blessings, through the secondary influence of a pious King. Great as towards King David was the veneration of the attending Ministers around him, and

deeply as they revered his Saint-like Spirit, yet did they not suffer their Souls to be absorbed in that contemplation, but looked with becoming piety from their Earthly King to Him, Who Sitteth upon His Throne in Heaven. Full of Grace and Wisdom, as seemed the utterances of David, yet did Benaiah piously proclaim the indispensable necessity of The DIVINE Sanction of David's direction, and seek in public and in seasonable prayer for The ALMIGHTY'S confirmation of the Royal decree, saying, "*The LORD GOD of my Lord, the King, Say so too!*" Oh that every lawful purpose were thus sought to be Sanctioned by DIVINE Countenance and Favour! that Human judgment were less relied upon, unless submitted to that Standard of Truth, the Revealed Will of GOD! Nor is the frankness of Benaiah to his King, as well as his fidelity to his GOD, unworthy of notice. In the hearing of David he asks of GOD to Give greater Earthly Glory to Solomon, than had surrounded the Majesty of his Sire. Saul was jealous of his Successor, and sought the destruction by his own hand of his own Son, for the support that Jonathan had given to David; but the Spirit of David was of an opposite character, and the purifying Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT had been cherished within it. In the surrender of Earthly power and of Earthly glory, David knew that he surrendered not his hopes of Greater Power and Higher Glory in Immortality; he envied not, therefore, the imprecated splendour of his Son's Earthly Throne, though the honesty of Benaiah was manifested in his prayer for it. Thus, indeed, is the Bounty of PROVIDENCE Displayed towards His Subjects that love Him, by Giving them Servants that love them, and that diligently seek their Masters' welfare, speaking the truth to them in all singleness of heart. The success, that finally crowned the efforts of David, Benaiah piously attributes to the Interposing Hand of GOD. All Good Gifts are indeed from Above,—wisdom to counsel, valour to fight, patience to endure, and gratitude to acknowledge, are all Emanations from The FOUNTAIN of Goodness, Power, and Wisdom; for indeed what have we, that we did not Thence receive? and, if David drew all his Benefits from GOD, and openly acknowledged that he did so, who, in the contemplation of the inestimable Blessing of Redemption through CHRIST JESUS, can say, that he is less a Debtor to his GOD? but how Few can boast that they have as much to pay, or have offered equal tribute in return! David's greatness was owing to The LORD'S Being with him in Clemency. Benaiah calculates on the Same Gracious Effect upon Solomon, through the Same hoped-for Cause. Let us hourly and instantly pray that The LORD be So with us! for with Him are Life and Peace and Joy Eternal; and without Him is neither help nor hope; but darkness and wretchedness and despair without end.

"So Zadok, the Priest, and Nathan, the Prophet, and Benaiah, the Son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites, went down, and caused Solomon to ride upon King David's mule, and brought him to Gihon. And Zadok, the Priest, took an horn of oil out of the Tabernacle, and anointed Solomon. And they blew the trumpet; and all the People said, '*GOD Save King Solomon!*' And all the People came up after him, and the People piped with pipes, and rejoiced with great joy, so that the Earth rent with the sound of them. And Adonijah, and all the Guests that were with him, heard it, as they had made an end of eating. And when Joab heard the sound of the trumpet, he said, '*Wherefore is this noise of the City being in an uproar?*' And while he yet spake, behold, Jonathan, the Son of Abiathar, the Priest, came: and Adonijah said unto him, '*Come in; for thou art a valiant Man, and bringest good tidings.*' And Jonathan answered, and said to Adonijah, '*Verily our Lord, King David, hath made Solomon King: and the King hath sent with him Zadok, the Priest, and Nathan, the Prophet, and Benaiah, the Son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites, and they have caused*

the opposition. The expedient resorted to subject by successive communication regard to the advanced age of + failure of his memory and fr still Lived in all the vi David, and in renewing he swore by That GC sealing, with the la' Overruling PROVI Crowned with the construction of + "Let my Lor drawing to acknowledge end of the out mea its dist Into t pray

and Nathan, the Prophet, up from thence rejoicing, so have heard: and also Solomon the King's Servants came to take the name of Solomon better than thy Throne? And the King bowed to the King, 'Blessed be The LORD GOD who sitteth on my Throne this day, mine eyes even were with Adonijah, were afraid, and rose up —1 Kings i, 38 to 49.

of Popular opinion! Adonijah, who was in instant, by the voice of the People, is, in an imagination a Kingly Potentate, upheld by the voice of the People abandoned, and left defenceless against the supreme Power he had vainly thought to have overreached. When guided by The DIVINE Will, and in observance of the Appointments of The ALMIGHTY, the force of the People is irresistible; but as the chaff before the blast, so is the People in the Hand of The LORD: He Driveth them whithersoever He Will. In The LORD, therefore, alone should be the confidence of strength. The concluding apostrophe of praise from the holy David to his GOD, for enabling him to see the Succession to his Throne confirmed to the wisest of his Sons, was in perfect unison with the prevailing feeling of his heart; for he loved The LORD always, and ever acknowledged how Great and Good He had been unto him. Devoted to His Will, it was natural that he should anxiously wish, at his concluding eventful Life, to witness its being in peace; and that the assurance of its prosperity scene, to witness its being in peace; and that the assurance of its prosperity under The DIVINE Favour, Defending it from Enemies both from within and from without, should be religiously sought and as piously hailed by him. Of all the scourges laid on Man by DIVINE Vengeance, perhaps, civil war is the most sorely afflictive; for in these all bonds of Kindred and of Social obligation are burst asunder, the Father fighting against the Son; the Son against the Father; and even the softer Sex, laying aside their nature, seem converted into Furies. To be Preserved from the prevalence or the prospect of such an evil, in the moment when its livid fires had begun to flash upon us from a distance, is a distinguishing Manifestation of The DIVINE Forbearance and Help. David, who knew the Ways of The LORD as intimately as by Man They could be found out, saw, in This timely Deliverance of his Country from the dreaded effects of insurrection and revolution, a further Instance of GOD'S Providential Care for His Chosen People; and, mixing the Father with the Patriot, exulted with a holy joy, that the chosen Son of the Father was Appointed by The KING of Kings to be the Ruler over His Chosen People Judah and Israel in union.

And Adonijah feared because of Solomon, and arose and went, and caught hold on the horns of the Altar. And it was told Solomon, saying, 'Behold, Adonijah feareth King Solomon; for lo, he hath caught hold on the horns of the Altar, saying, 'Let King Solomon swear unto me to-day that he will not slay his Servant with the sword!' And Solomon said, 'If he will shew himself a worthy Man, there shall not an hair of him fall to the earth; but if wickedness shall be found in him, he shall die.' So King Solomon sent, and they brought him down from the Altar. And he came, and bowed himself to King Solomon: and Solomon said unto him, 'Go to thine house!' —1 Kings i, 50 to 53.

With what thorns and briars are the ways of Ambition beset! and how true is it, that "Pride goeth before a fall," and "He, that exalteth himself, shall be abased." Adonijah, who might have been, as was his Father David in the lifetime of Saul, honoured by Princes and by People, and reputed Second only to

him, that sat upon the Throne, by his vain imagination, thinking to get one step higher, fell from his greatness, and became as a Criminal and a Traitor, overwhelmed with apprehension and dismay at the expected and acknowledged punishment due for his insurrection: all the greatness of his Nature forsook him with his unstable Associates in guilt, and he fled abject and terror-struck to the Altar of his GOD for Protection; but with what feelings, alas! were his steps directed to that Holy Sanctuary,—not for the Salvation of his Soul—not from a deep sense of his former forgetfulness of GOD, and from a hearty desire of thenceforth following the Commandments of The LORD, and in all things submitting to His Ordinances, but from a mean, and dastardly and selfish policy, seeking to disarm the vengeance of his temporal Adversary, by exciting in him the operation of Spiritual reverence; no pious dictate, emanating from his bosom, influencing the measure, but a crafty calculation that the tender conscience of the King would intercede to avert his chastisement: nor was the expectation realized, for Solomon, though in the plenitude of power, was not unmindful of The SOURCE from Whence it Sprung. His heart, tutored by Parental care in the Truths of Holy Writ, did not profane the Sanctuary, but, proclaiming pardon to the guilty Rebel, admonished him to acquit himself like a Man reformed both in principles and practice, and to study to be quiet in the Land, seeking peace and ensuing it. At such a frustration of his schemes, and with hopes so entirely overthrown, what self-confusion and convicted shame must have flashed on the mind of Adonijah at the recollection of his arrogant presumption and folly! But what ten thousand-fold more of self-reproach and remorse will that Man feel, who, seeking to overturn the Empire of CHRIST, either in his own heart or in the hearts of Others, shall, in the hour of Death, find himself to have rebelled against The MOST HIGH, and his Soul to be brought to destruction in the grave; unless there shall be found Mercy in That same SAVIOUR, Whom he hath reviled, and from Whom Alone Cometh pardon and Peace for Eternity.

*"Now the days of David drew nigh that he should die; and he charged Solomon, his Son, saying, 'I go the way of all the Earth; be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a Man: and keep the Charge of The LORD, thy GOD, to walk in His Ways, to keep His Statutes, and His Commandments, and His Judgments, and His Testimonies, as it is Written in the Law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself: that The LORD may Continue His Word Which He Spake concerning me, Saying, 'If thy Children take heed to their way, to walk before Me in truth with all their heart, and with all their Soul, there shall not fail thee (Said He) a Man on the Throne of Israel.'"—1 Kings ii, 1 to 4.* △

How awful and affecting is this death-bed scene of a Conqueror and a King! how impressive and admonitory is the lesson he inculcates! how solemn and imposing the great Truths that he proclaims! and how salutary is the guidance that he imparts to every One, who will seek and follow it.

David, in the prospect of his approaching dissolution, foreknowing that his body, as dust, would return to the Earth as it was, and his Spirit would return unto GOD Who Gave it, most steadfastly assured of the Truth of DIVINE Revelation, as Contained in the Writings of Moses, and deeply conscious of the Omnipotence and Omniscience of The DEITY, exhorts to the adoption of the compound principle of faith unto obedience. So are we elsewhere admonished to be "*steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the works of The LORD, for as much as we know that our labour shall not be in vain in The LORD.*" To be strong in The LORD and in the Power of His Might, we must do What He hath commanded, and then truly shall we find that He is our HELPER and our

DEFENDER. The observance of the Statutes He hath Ordained, and of the Commandments He hath Graciously Given, as the Rule of our Life; a belief in the Judgments He hath Pronounced against the wicked Doer, without any respect of Persons; and a confidence in the Testimonies Revealed of the Precious Promises He hath Vouchsafed to Make of Life and Peace and Joy Eternal, will ensure to us, equally as to Solomon, the Favour of our GOD and the Protection of His Providence. In all Spiritual Objects at least, when so Fortified, we shall assuredly prosper, and have reason to rejoice in all that we do and whithersoever we turn ourselves. And though temporal Thrones await us not, yet a Crown of Glory, which fadeth not away, Eternal in the Heavens, is Laid up for us, when this short transitory Life is past. And as a present reward the blessed hope of Everlasting Life in communion with Angels and Saints, and in the Society of the Spiritualized Abraham and David, is Imparted to us.

"Moreover (said David to Solomon) thou knowest also what Joab, the Son of Zeruiah, did to me, and what he did to the two Captains of the Hosts of Israel, unto Abner, the Son of Ner, and unto Amasa, the Son of Jether, whom he slew, and shed the blood of war in peace, and put the blood of war upon his girdle, that was about his loins, and in his shoes, that were on his feet: Do therefore according to thy wisdom, and let not his hoar head go down to the grave in peace! But shew kindness unto the Sons of Barzillai, the Gileadite, and let them be of those that eat at thy table: for so they came to me, when I fled because of Absalom, thy Brother! And, behold, thou hast with thee Shimei, the Son of Gera, a Benjamite of Bahurim, which cursed me with a grievous curse in the day when I went to Mahanaim: but he came down to meet me at Jordan, and I sware to him by The LORD, saying, 'I will not put thee to death with the sword.' Now therefore hold him not guiltless! for thou art a wise Man, and knowest what thou oughtest to do unto him; but his hoar head bring thou down to the grave with blood!"—1 Kings ii, 5 to 9.

Amidst the predominating influence of piety in the heart of David, amidst so deep a sense of his own unworthiness, and the avowed consciousness of the necessity of DIVINE Mercy towards himself, it is a lamentable proof of the weakness and unspirituality of Human Nature his closing so glorious a career, as his general conduct exhibited, with a thirst for blood and a deep and fixed resolution not to visit with clemency the transgressions committed against his Friends or himself. Joab was unquestionably a restless Spirit, and after the death of David that Spirit might again burst forth in rebellion against Solomon, and unsettle the peace of Israel; but a caution to watch narrowly his movements and disarm him of power, affording him, at the same time, a season for repentance and the making his peace with his GOD, might have seemed more accordant with a dying Man's injunction. And to such intercession Joab seemed especially entitled, as he had been made the Instrument, though, perhaps, but too willingly, of blood-shedding for the lustful purposes of David, in the murder of the innocent Uriah, and had manifested a forward zeal, though in opposition certainly to David's wishes, for his preservation, by the sacrifice of the rebellious Absalom. Had David counselled mercy instead of sacrifice, to him whose reign was to be typical of That of The PRINCE of Peace, and had he admonished Solomon not to be extreme to mark what had been done amiss by Joab, and bade him, for his Earthly Father's sake, to shew mercy, that he might hope for Mercy from his FATHER, Which is in Heaven, how much more interesting would have been the portraiture of this great Character in the last hours of his eventful and instructive and valuable and generally exemplary life. But happily, in the absence of encouragement from the example in this respect of David, to *forgive our Enemies, and to do good to them, that despitefully use and persecute us*, we Christians have a Brighter Example Set us by our Blessed

SAVIOUR JESUS, The Son of David, to seek peace and ensue it; and in the very hour of suffering to pray for Pardon even of our bitterest Persecutors.

*"So David slept with his Fathers, and was buried in the City of David. And he days that David reigned over Israel were forty years: seven years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty and three years reigned he in Jerusalem."*—1 Kings ii, 10, 11.

Death is in effect but a sleep, and, happily for Man, it is unquestionably not an everlasting one; but when the Trumpet of the Arch-Angel shall sound, and call the Spirits of all Flesh to their Judgment, the Dead shall be raised, and this mortal body shall put on Immortality. Oh, how happy, unspeakably happy, are Those, who, like David, died in The LORD, letting their works follow them! How sweet shall be their sleep on the pillow of Death! and how joyful shall be their Resurrection, when, with Abraham and with David, and all the holy Army of Saints and Martyrs, they rise to an Inheritance, which is Eternal in the Heavens, where Death shall no more have dominion over them; but where Peace, amid the visual Glories of their SAVIOUR-GOD, shall be their Portion for ever and ever! How Blessed will then be the Spirits of Abraham and David, who proved such profitable Servants of the talents Committed to their trust! how great will be the measure of their Reward for having converted so many Sinners from the errors of their ways, and Instrumentally saved so many souls alive! May we, as far as is Permitted by PROVIDENCE, according to our several abilities, live the life of the righteous Abraham and of the holy David, that our latter end may be like theirs!

The continuation of the narrative from the Chronicles is as follows:—

*"And they made Solomon, the Son of David, King the second time, and Anointed him unto The LORD to be the Chief Governor, and Zadok to be Priest. Then Solomon sat on the Throne of The LORD, as King, instead of David his Father, and prospered; and all Israel obeyed him: and all the Princes and he mighty Men, and all the Sons likewise of King David, submitted themselves unto Solomon the King. And The LORD Magnified Solomon exceedingly in the sight of all Israel, and Bestowed upon him Such Royal Majesty as had not been on any King before him in Israel."*—1 Chron. xxix, second part of 22 to 25.

The great and Patriotic object of David was thus fully answered, and a confirmation brought consolatorily to his Soul, that in the selection he had made of his Successor to the Sovereignty, he had followed the Gracious Purpose of The KING of Kings, and contributed to give the most estimable and acceptable Benefit to his devoted Subjects, a Reign of Peace.

*"Thus David, the Son of Jesse, reigned over all Israel: and the time that he reigned over Israel was forty years: seven years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty and three years reigned he in Jerusalem. And he died in a good old age, full of days, riches, and honour; and Solomon, his Son, reigned in his stead."*—1 Chron. xxix, 26 to 28.

Scarcely does history exhibit a life so eventful and full of important incident as David's; and rarely amidst the persecutions and temptations, that beset and surrounded him, has so great and exemplary a Character been displayed. His leading principle was faith in GOD, a principle, which is the great corner stone of wisdom, inasmuch as it insures us, in the Life that is, the Aid of An ALMIGHTY Arm, the Guidance of an Unerring Counsel, and the Consolations of a Never-Failing COMFORTER; and, as the fruit of this faith, we gather also in this Life that Peace, which passeth all unspiritualized understanding, and have, moreover, the holy hope of Heavenly Joy without measure and without end in the Life to Come. Oh! may the faith, that was in Abraham and in David, be in us! that, whether our continuance on Earth be long or short, we may share in that hope, that was their Succour and Comfort here, and may be




Partakers of their Joy in the KINGDOM of their FATHER and our FATHER, of their GOD and our GOD! And, having their hope through their faith, may we cherish in our hearts and exemplify in our Lives their *charity*; that our Calling and Election to Heavenly Rest, in the Mansions of Eternity, may be made sure through the Merits and Mediation of JESUS, The CHRIST, both GOD and Man, Who, being from Everlasting ONE with The FATHER and The HOLY GHOST, truly Said of Himself, though Born in The World, and of the Seed of Abraham and of David, "*Before Abraham was, I am.*"

Interesting as is the History of David, and fruitful as it is, both in example and precept, of exhortation to walk in That Way Which hath the truest consolations of the Life that is, as well as the sure Promise of That, Which is to Come, there is yet another debt of gratitude, which it behoves us to pay to the memory of this estimable Man; the acknowledgment of the gratification and benefit derived to Christians of all Nations, as well as to Jews, from his literary compositions, which, as Emanating from the cherished Dictates of The HOLY SPIRIT, and Preserved to such distant ages, by DIVINE Love and Mercy, form so interesting a part of That Holy Book, Which is a Light to our feet and a Lantern to our paths,—Which Feedeth All, that hunger and thirst after Righteousness, with the Bread and Water of Eternal Life,—Which Imparteth Solace under affliction, and Bindeth up the wounds of the Broken-hearted,—Which Inviteth to the joys of contentment, and the satisfaction of resignation, Making our very duties the second causes of our most substantial delights; and not only Rendering our paths here those of pleasantness and peace, but giving us the unspeakable and inestimable consolation of that Hope, Which is full of a Glorious Immortality. On the character and merit of those Psalms, the commentary of the estimable Dr. Horne, once Bishop of Norwich, may most profitably be consulted. A version of them and Family Prayers from them, by the same pen which wrote the foregoing History, is some proof of the love and admiration entertained for them, and of a veneration for their Authors; for though all are ascribed to David, in consideration of the great share he had in them, many are allowed to have been written by the pens of Others. Having thus cursorily remarked on the History of Abraham and David, we now enter upon That of HIM, Whom David acknowledged to be his LORD, JESUS CHRIST, The SON of GOD, and SAVIOUR of Man.

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## THOUGHTS ON THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW.

CHAP. I, v. 1.—The Book of the Generation of JESUS CHRIST, The SON of David,   
The SON of Abraham.

The Scriptural Authorities Prophetical of the occurrence here historically but briefly Recorded, that JESUS, The SON of GOD, when Taking upon Himself our Nature, therein to Become the Propitiation for our sins, and the Reconciliation between our CREATOR and Ourselves, was the Son of David, the Son of Abraham, have been classed and commented upon in detached thoughts on this Passage heading the character and history of both Abraham and David; and wherein the Lives and conduct of Both have, in the outline at least, been taken into consideration, with a view to justify the very prominent Station Allotted to their names as connected with the Gracious and Inestimable Mission of The SON of THE MOST HIGH to Earth.

Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Judas and his Brethren; and Judas begat Phares and Zara of Thamar; and Phares begat Esrom; and Esrom begat Aram; and Aram begat Aminadab; and Aminadab begat Naasson; and Naasson begat Salmon; and Salmon begat Booz of Rachab; and Booz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse; and Jesse begat David the King; and David the King begat Solomon of her that had been the wife of Urias; and Solomon begat Roboam; and Roboam begat Abia; and Abia begat Asa; and Asa begat Josaphat; and Josaphat begat Joram; and Joram begat Ozias; and Ozias begat Joatham; and Joatham begat Achaz; and Achaz begat Ezekias; and Ezekias begat Manasses; and Manasses begat Amon; and Amon begat Josias; and Josias begat Jechonias and his Brethren, about the time they were carried away to Babylon: and after they were brought to Babylon, Jechonias begat Salathiel; and Salathiel begat Zorobabel; and Zorobabel begat Abiud; and Abiud begat Eliakim; and Eliakim begat Azor; and Azor begat Sadoc; and Sadoc begat Achim; and Achim begat Eliud; and Eliud begat Eleazar; and Eleazar begat Matthan; and Matthan begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Joseph, the Husband of Mary, of whom was Born JESUS, Who is called CHRIST. So all the Generations from Abraham to David are fourteen Generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen Generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto CHRIST are fourteen Generations.—2 to 17.

The Genealogy of our SAVIOUR in an inverted order is thus set forth by the Evangelist St. Luke, *And JESUS (as was supposed) was the Son of Joseph, which was the Son of Heli, which was the Son of Matthat, which was the Son of Levi, which was the Son of Melchi, which was the Son of Janna, which was the Son of Joseph, which was the Son of Mattathias, which was the Son of Amos, which was the Son of Naum, which was the Son of Esi, which was the Son of Nagge, which was the Son of Maath, which was the Son of Mattathias, which was the Son of Semei, which was the Son of Joseph, which was the Son of Juda, which was the Son of Joanna, which was the Son of Rhessa, which was the Son of Zorobabel, which was the Son of Salathiel, which was the Son of Neri, which was the Son of Melchi, which was the Son of Addi, which was the Son of Cosam, which was the Son of Elmodam, which was the Son of Er, which was the Son of Jose, which was the Son of Eliezer, which was the Son of Jorim, which was the Son of Matthat, which was the Son of Levi, which was the Son of Simeon, which was the Son of Juda, which was the Son of Joseph, which was the Son of Jonan, which was the Son of Eliakim, which was the Son of Melea, which was the Son of Menan, which was the Son of*

*Mattatha, which was the Son of Nathan, which was the Son of David, which was the Son of Jesse, which was the Son of Obed, which was the Son of Booz, which was the Son of Salmon, which was the Son of Naasson, which was the Son of Aminadab, which was the Son of Aram, which was the Son of Esrom, which was the Son of Phares, which was the Son of Juda, which was the Son of Jacob, which was the Son of Isaac, which was the Son of Abraham, which was the Son of Thara [in Gen. xi, 24, Terah], which was the Son of Nachor [in Gen. xi, 22, Nahor], which was the Son of Saruch [in Gen. xi, 20, Serug], which was the Son of Ragau [in Gen. xi, 18, Reu], which was the Son of Phalec [in Gen. xi, 16, Peleg], which was the Son of Heber [in Gen. xi, 14, Eber], which was the Son of Sala [in Gen. xi, 12, Salah, and there stated as the Son of Arphaxad], which was the Son of Cainan [not mentioned in Genesis xi, 12], which was the Son of Arphaxad, which was the Son of Sem [in Gen. v, 32, Shem], which was the Son of Noe [in Gen. v, 29, Noah], which was the Son of Lamech, which was the Son of Mathusala [in Gen. v, 21, Methuselah], which was the Son of Enoch, which was the Son of Jared, which was the Son of Maleleel [in Gen. v, 12, Mahalaleel], which was the Son of Cainan, which was the Son of Enos, which was the Son of Seth, which was the Son of Adam, which was the Son of GOD.—Luke iii, 23 to 38.*

St. Matthew has omitted the line of descent from Adam to Abraham. St. Luke's description of it accords with only one exception (which may be accounted for by the Grandson succeeding the Grandfather from the intermediate death of the Father) with the history given of it by Moses in the Book of Genesis. In the continuation of the descent from Abraham to David (the principal Characters in the History, and from Whom especially the Promised Blessing of The MESSIAH was expressly to Proceed), Both the Evangelists are in exact conformity with each Other. From David downwards there is an obvious difference between these two Writers, the One deducing the descent through Solomon, as one Son of David, the Other through Nathan, another of David's Offspring: though Both Evangelists agree that JESUS was born of the Virgin Mary, who was betrothed to Joseph, Both of whom were admissively of the Tribe of Judah. It is not improbable that the one descent was that of Mary, the other of Joseph. Neither St. Mark, nor St. John, enter so minutely into our SAVIOUR'S Lineage. St. Mark's object seems prominently to insist on The DIVINITY of His Nature, as The SON of GOD. In detailing the infidelity of the Jews, he records them to have thus spoken of Him, when expressing their surprise at His Pre-eminent wisdom and Power, "*Is not This the Carpenter, the Son of Mary, the Brother of James, and Joses and of Judah and Simon? and are not His Sisters here with us?*"—vi, 3. The same Apostle, in his narrative of blind Bartimeus's restoration to sight, tells us that the Latter, when addressing our SAVIOUR in the hearing of a Multitude around, said, "*JESUS, Thou Son of David, Have Mercy on me!*"—x, 47; and again, in the account of the triumphant Entry of The Meek and Lowly JESUS into Jerusalem, the Evangelist relates, that the People shouted, "*Blessed be the Kingdom of our Father David, That Cometh in The Name of THE LORD! Hosannah in The HIGHEST!*"—xi, 10; and in relating a Speech of our SAVIOUR Himself, When he was Teaching in the Temple, he reports Him to have thus Questioned His Hearers, *How say the Scribes, "That CHRIST is the Son of David?" for David himself said by The HOLY GHOST, "THE LORD Said to my LORD, 'Sit Thou on My Right Hand, till I Make Thine Enemies Thy Footstool!'" David therefore himself calleth Him LORD; and whence is He then his Son?*—xii, 35 to 37. Not thereby denying His Descent from David in the flesh as Man, which even His most bitter Enemies acknowledged, but intimating that His Higher and

iritual NATURE was from GOD, and was VERY GOD. St. John too only cursorily and incidentally alludes to the temporal Birth of CHRIST JESUS, as an. In stating the first accession of the Apostles to the belief in JESUS, as the CHRIST, he relates that *Philip finding Nathanael, said unto him, "We have and Him, of Whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets did write, JESUS of Nazareth, the Son of Joseph."*—John i, 45. The same Apostle speaks of the Father of JESUS, and of the part she took, in his narrative of the First Miracle effected by our SAVIOUR on the marriage in Cana of Galilee.—ii, 1; and in a similar narrative to St. Mark, when recounting the murmurings of the Jews at CHRIST'S Assertion of His being *The SON of GOD*, he also represents them have put the questions, *Is not This Jesus, the Son of Joseph, whose Father and Mother we know? how is it then that he saith, "I came down from Heaven?"*—vi, 42; and in detailing the distressing Events of our Blessed SAVIOUR'S crucifixion, the Apostle thus describes JESUS Himself as Acknowledging His other: *Now there stood by the Cross of JESUS His Mother, and His Mother's sister, Mary the Wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. When JESUS therefore Saw His Mother, and the Disciple standing by, whom He Loved, He Saith unto His Mother, "Woman, behold thy Son!" Then Saith He to the Disciple, Behold thy Mother!" And from that hour that Disciple took her unto his own me.*—John xix. 25 to 27.

ow the Birth of JESUS CHRIST was on this wise: When as His Mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together She was found with Child of The HOLY GHOST. Then Joseph, her Husband, being a just Man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the Angel of The LORD appeared unto him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, thou Son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy Wife! for That, Which is Conceived in her, is of The HOLY GHOST: and She shall bring forth a SON, and thou shalt call His Name JESUS; for He shall Save His People from their sins." Now All This was Done that it might be Fulfilled Which was Spoken of The LORD by the Prophet, saying, "Behold, a Virgin shall be with Child, and shall bring forth a SON, and they shall call His Name EMMANUEL; Which, being interpreted, is, GOD with us." Then Joseph, being raised from sleep, did as the Angel of The LORD had bidden him, and took unto him his Wife; and knew her not till She had brought forth her First Born SON; and he called His Name JESUS. —18 to 26. △

In the relation of our SAVIOUR'S Birth and the circumstances attending it, St. Luke is even more minute; and he prefaces his account with that of the miraculous conception and birth of John the Baptist, the Forerunner of JESUS; and who, by DIVINE Appointment, was specially Chosen to prepare The SAVIOUR'S Way before Him; and thus, in the most express terms, does the Evangelist insist upon that his History as true and essential to be believed. *Forasmuch (he writes) as Many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of Those Things, Which are most surely believed among us, even as they delivered Them unto us, which from the beginning were Eye-Witnesses, and Ministers of the Word; it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of All Things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty of Those Things, Wherein thou hast been instructed. There was, in the days of Herod, the King of Judea, a certain Priest named Zacharias, of the Course of Abia; and his Wife was of the Daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth. And they were Both righteous before GOD, walking in all the Commandments and Ordinances of The LORD blameless: and they had no Child, because that Elisabeth was barren; and they Both were now well stricken in years. And it came to pass, that while he executed the Priest's office before GOD in the order of his Course, according to the custom of the Priest's office, his lot was*

to burn incense, when he went into the Temple of The LORD. And the whole multitude of the People were praying without at the time of incense. And there appeared unto him an Angel of The LORD standing on the right side of the Altar of incense. And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him: but the Angel said unto him, "Fear not, Zacharias! for thy prayer is Heard, and thy Wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a Son, and thou shalt call his name John: and thou shalt have joy and gladness: and Many shall rejoice at his birth; for he shall be Great in the Sight of The LORD; and shall drink neither wine, nor strong drink; and he shall be Filled with The HOLY GHOST, even from his Mother's womb: and Many of the Children of Israel shall he turn to The LORD, their GOD. And he shall go before Him in the Spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the Fathers to the Children, and the Disobedient to the Wisdom of the Just; to make ready a People prepared for The LORD." And Zacharias said unto the Angel, "Whereby shall I know This? for I am an old Man, and my Wife well stricken in years." And the Angel answering, said unto him, "I am Gabriel, that stand in the Presence of GOD, and am Sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee These Glad Tidings: and, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that These Things shall be Performed; because thou believest not my Words, which shall be Fulfilled in their Season." And the People waited for Zacharias, and marvelled that he tarried so long in the Temple; and when he came out, he could not speak unto them; and they perceived that he had seen a Vision in the Temple; for he beckoned unto them, and remained speechless. And it came to pass, that as soon as the days of his administration were accomplished, he departed to his own house. And after those days his Wife Elisabeth conceived, and hid herself five months, saying, "Thus hath The LORD Dealt with me in the days wherein He Looked on me to Take away my reproach among Men." And in the sixth month the Angel Gabriel was Sent from GOD unto a City of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a Virgin espoused to a Man, whose name was Joseph, of the House of David; and the Virgin's name was Mary; and the Angel came in unto her, and said, "Hail, thou, that art Highly Favoured; The LORD is with thee; Blessed art thou among Women!" And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of Salutation This should be? And the Angel said unto her, "Fear not Mary! for Thou hast found Favour with GOD: and, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a SON, and shalt call His Name JESUS: He shall be Great, and shall be Called The SON of THE HIGHEST; and The LORD GOD shall Give unto Him the Throne of His Father David; and He shall Reign over the House of Jacob for Ever: and of His KINGDOM there shall be no end." Then said Mary unto the Angel, "How shall This be, seeing I know not a Man?" And the Angel answered, and said unto her, "The HOLY GHOST shall Come upon thee, and The Power of The HIGHEST shall Overshadow thee: therefore also That Holy Thing, Which shall be Born of Thee, shall be Called 'The SON of GOD.' And, behold, thy Cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a Son in her old age; and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren: for with GOD Nothing shall be Impossible." And Mary said, "Behold the Hand-Maid of The LORD: Be it unto me according to thy Word!" And the Angel departed from her. And Mary arose in those days, and went into the Hill Country with haste, into a City of Juda, and entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth; and it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the Babe leaped in her womb: and Elisabeth was Filled with The HOLY GHOST, and she spake out with a loud voice, and said, "Blessed art thou among Women, and Blessed is the Fruit of thy womb! And whence is this to me, that the Mother of my LORD should come to me? For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the Babe

l in my womb for joy. And Blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a rmance of Those Things, Which were Told her from The LORD. And Mary "My Soul doth magnify The LORD, and my Spirit hath rejoiced in GOD AVIOUR. For He hath Regarded the low estate of His Handmaiden: for, l, from henceforth all Generations shall call me Blessed. For He, That is ty, hath Done to me Great Things; and Holy is His Name. And His y is upon them that fear Him from Generation to Generation. He hath ed Strength with His Arm; He hath Scattered the Proud in the imagination ir hearts. He hath Put Down the Mighty from their seats, and Exalted them y degree. He hath Filled the Hungry with good things; and the Rich He hath empty away. He hath Holpen His Servant Israel, in Remembrance of His y; as He Spake to our Fathers, to Abraham, and to his Seed for ever." And abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house. Now Elisa- full time came that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a Son. And Veighbours and her Cousins heard how The LORD had Sheved great Mercy her; and they rejoiced with her. And it came to pass, that on the eighth day ame to circumcise the Child; and they called him Zacharias, after the name s Father. And his Mother answered, and said, "Not so; but he shall be ' John." And they said unto her, "There is None of thy Kindred that is ' by this name." And they made signs to his Father, how he would have him ': and he asked for a writing table and wrote, saying, "His name is John." they marvelled All. And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue ', and he spake, and praised GOD. And fear came on All that dwelt ' about them; and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the Hill try of Judea; and all they that heard them, laid them up in their hearts, y, "What manner of Child shall this be?" And the Hand of The LORD with him. And his Father, Zacharias, was Filled with The HOLY DST, and Prophetied, saying, "Blessed be The LORD GOD of Israel; for th Visited and Redeemed His People, and hath Raised up an Horn of Salva- or us in the House of His Servant David; as He Spake by the mouth of His Prophets, Which have been since the World began; that we should be Saved our Enemies, and from the hand of All that hate us; to Perform the Mercy ised to our Fathers, and to Remember His Holy Covenant, the Oath Which ware to our Father Abraham, that He would Grant unto us, that we, being ered out of the hand of our Enemies, might serve Him without fear, in ss and righteousness before Him all the days of our Life. And thou, Child, be called 'The Prophet of The HIGHEST;' for thou shalt go before the of The LORD to prepare His Ways; to give knowledge of Salvation unto eople by the Remission of their sins, through the Tender Mercy of our GOD, by The DAY-SPRING from On HIGH hath Visited us, to Give Light to that sit in darkness and in the shadow of Death, to Guide our feet into the way ice." And the Child grew and waxed strong in Spirit, and was in the Deserts e day of his shewing unto Israel. And it came to pass in those days, that went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the World should be taxed; this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was Governor of Syria;) and All e to be taxed; every One into his own City. And Joseph also went up from e, out of the City of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the City of David, which is Bethlehem, (because he was of the House and Lineage of David;) to be taxed, Mary, his espoused Wife, being great with Child. And so it was, that, while ere there, the days were accomplished that She should be delivered; and She t forth her First-born SON, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger; because there was no room for them in the Inn. And there in the same Country Shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their

*flock by night; and, lo, the Angel of The LORD came upon them, and the Glory of The LORD Shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the Angel said unto them, "Fear not! For, Behold, I bring you Good Tidings of Great Joy, Which shall be to all People: for unto you is Born this day, in the City of David, A SAVIOUR, Which is CHRIST, The LORD! And this shall be a Sign unto you, ye shall find the BABE wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the Angel a Multitude of the Heavenly Host, praising GOD, and saying, "Glory to GOD in The Highest, and on Earth Peace, Good Will toward Men!" And it came to pass, as the Angels were gone away from them into Heaven, the Shepherds said One to Another, "Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see This Thing Which is come to pass, Which The LORD hath Made Known unto us!" And they came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the BABE lying in a manger. And when they had seen It, they made known abroad the Saying Which was Told them concerning This CHILD: and all They that heard it, wondered at Those Things Which were told them by the Shepherds. But Mary kept all These Things, and pondered Them in her heart. And the Shepherds returned, glorifying and praising GOD for All the Things That that they had heard and seen, as it was Told unto them. And when eight days were accomplished for the Circumcising of The CHILD, His Name was called JESUS, Which was so Named of the Angel before He was Conceived in the womb."*  
—St. Luke, Ch. i, and ii, to v. 21.

The Account here given is in every respect, and most deeply, interesting. The characters of Zacharias and Elisabeth, so correspondent with the sacredness of the office, which the One filled, and the intimate connection held with him by the Other, mark the Gracious Discrimination of The DEITY, in Blessing them with that Fruit of their Conjugal union, which as dedicated in sacrifice to The LORD and profitable to His Service, brings the Parental bosoms the most welcomed and heartfelt sensations of delight. The attainment of such a consummation of bliss in the Nuptial state, seems to have been the chiefest Earthly Blessing sought by Zacharias from The GIVER of all Good Things; and being sought in the way, which rarely fails of success, by prayer and faith (*for the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous Man availeth much*), it was happily obtained. But, though asked in his daily orisons, and occupying, perhaps, a prominent place in the workings of his imaginations and fondest desires, when the Promise of the Fulfilment of his hope was Divinely Vouchsafed unto him, though righteous as his general conduct was, and holy as was the occupation in which, at that time, he was engaged (for he was ministering about Holy Things, and may be supposed, therefore, to have been holding direct Communion with GOD), yet the sense of fear at first overcame him. From such a Man's manifestation of the most profound awe at even the appearance of an Angel, whose countenance must have beamed with holy love, may be gathered an evidence of the higher purity of the Spirits of Heaven over Man in his most exalted Earthly character; and, consequently of that more Glorious Nature that awaits the Adopted Children of GOD within the Land of Spirits in the Life to Come; when the Season, for which Man was Made a little lower than the Angels, shall have passed away, and be succeeded by That, wherein he shall be Crowned with Honour and Immortality. And, indeed, of the Hallowed Offspring of this pious Couple it was Declared by JESUS Himself, *That among them, which were born of Woman, there had not arisen a Greater than John the Baptist; but that he, who was least in the KINGDOM of HEAVEN, was Greater than he.*—Matt. xi, 11; and this, notwithstanding John was Filled with The HOLY GHOST, even from his Mother's womb; a Gift so peculiarly a Mark of The DIVINE Favour, that the possession and right use of It constitute Man's truest Riches both in this Life,

and in That which is come. Indeed the Soul's capacity for that Holiness, without which no One shall see The LORD but with utter confusion and despair, is entirely dependant on Its use of This HOLY SPIRIT'S Influence, now so Graciously and Freely Offered unto All; for through the Mediation of CHRIST That SPIRIT is ever Ready and Willing to Act for the Sanctification of All who will thankfully observe Its Dictates and follow Its Guidance. Yea, the health of the Soul is as essentially affected by the adoption or rejection of the Merciful Dispensation of the Grace of This DIVINE PHYSICIAN, as that of the Body is by the state of the air it inhales. Zacharias had prayed for a Child at a season of life, when he could scarcely have hoped to have himself lived to have witnessed the Child's attaining Manhood; and might himself, in the course of Nature, have been called upon to have left him, when he most needed a Father's influence to encourage, by precept and example, his growth in Grace. But so Great is the Goodness of GOD towards Such as love Him, and so truly was this Manifested in His Dealings with Zacharias, that He not only Promised him the gratification of his wish to be a Father, but Added to That exhilarating Promise the Assurance, unspeakably Comforting to a Parent's bosom, *That his Child should be Great in the Sight of The LORD; that he should be Filled with The HOLY GHOST even from his Mother's womb; that Many of the Children of Israel he should turn to The LORD, their GOD: and that he should go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the Fathers to the Children, and the Disobedient to the wisdom of the Just: to make ready a People prepared for The LORD.*—Luke i, 15 to 17. But alas, how unwilling is the corrupted heart of Man to yield its carnal imaginations to SPIRITUAL Direction, and to cherish the adoption of that Faith, whereby All Things Revealed from on HIGH are believed, and the Particular as well as General Providences of GOD are at once and unqualifiedly acknowledged! Zacharias, though tutored from his infancy in the Law of The LORD, and daily confessing the Omnipotent Operations of His Hand, yet doubted the Fulfilment of His Avowed Purpose; and this, not in an humble distrust of his own worthiness of Such an Instance of The DIVINE Regard, but from a conception that The LORD could not, or, at least, would not Alter the ordinary state of Female economy, and Make the barren Woman, and One especially whose womb had been sealed by age, to become a joyful Mother, —a doubt, which was moreover faithlessly pronounced, after an Angel from Heaven had said, that The ALMIGHTY so Purposed it. The example of Abraham and Sarah, the Record of which was so continually before the eyes of Zacharias, should have profited for his admonition. But notwithstanding Zacharias's incredulosity, The LORD was not Extreme to Visit his faithlessness with severity; for in His Judgment He Thought upon Mercy; Inflicting but the Gentle Chastisement of temporary silence for the offence. And well, indeed, would it be, if we were to impose silence upon ourselves for every act of infidelity and distrust towards GOD; and that in every departure from His Law we sat in judgment upon ourselves by a daily examination of our words and thoughts, that we might take heed to our tongues, and not lightly regard the Appointment or Admonition of The LORD.

The Conception of our SAVIOUR by the Virgin Mary without any communication with Man, however contrary to the general course of Human Nature, was assuredly not beyond the Reach of That POWER, by Which, as Centred in GOD, Nature itself ("which is but another name for an effect, Whose Cause is GOD,") was Created, and on Which its continuance depends. And such a conception was only in unison with the ideas of Purity, which are indispensably applicable to The DEITY; for the Descent of The HOLY GHOST, Which, as GOD is A SPIRIT, was confined, doubtlessly, to the Production of a Spiritual



Union with GOD of the Body, in which JESUS, as The SON of GOD, was to Come forth from the Virgin's womb; for in *Heaven* (as was afterwards Avowed by The Same JESUS,) *there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage.* With this preliminary observation, offered in the firmness of belief, and in the charity of hope that unhallowed thoughts may not be engendered or fostered on a Subject of such vast importance as a right view of the Nature as well as Character of our DIVINE MEDIATOR, we may safely proceed to a more particular consideration of the Circumstances attending His Incarnation.

Of the Seed of Abraham and of David, according to the sure Word of Prophecy, The MESSIAH was to be; and there is no reason to discredit the presumption that Mary was descended as well from David, as she unquestionably was from Abraham; though as she was betrothed to Joseph, and therefore in spirit married to him, and as the Husband is the Head of the Wife, the Genealogy is only traced by St. Matthew to Joseph; and by the Levitical Law marriages were restricted to Members of the same Tribe.

The Visitation of Angels as the Especial Messengers of GOD to His Creatures before the Gospel, and more particularly in the early periods of the Jewish history, was matter of frequent occurrence. But on no occasion since the World's Creation has Such a Spiritual Embassy, so Honourable to the Individual Addressed by It, and so Important and Beneficial in its Consequences to all Mankind, been proclaimed, as This; for thereby was Mary, though Woman, Chosen to be the Instrument of bringing to Life and Light Mankind's REDEEMER, Who was to Atonement for the error of that first Created Female, by whose disobedience to A DIVINE Command the fall of Man, from Purity and Paradise, was superinduced. And the salutation of the Angel to her, marks the high sense he entertained of the Glory and Pre-eminence of the Office thus Cast on Mary: *Hail Thou, that art Highly Favoured! The LORD is with Thee: Blessed art Thou among Women!* The Same LORD, That had been with Eve before her transgression, was with Mary in her Sanctification. With all the purity of Soul belonging to her, yet in the presence of the Messenger of That GOD, *Who Charges His Angels with folly, and in Whose Eyes the Heavens themselves are not pure,* Mary was struck with reverential awe, and remained in respectful silence; not manifesting an impatient curiosity on the occasion, but waiting the Acceptable Time of The LORD for the Further Revelation of His Gracious Designs towards her. The Favour of The LORD Comprises in It the possession or the prospect of Every Blessing that can be Spiritually enjoyed, or should be piously desired; and to attain unto It should be the unceasing study of our Lives here, as the full attainment of It in the Life to Come, will bring with It the most perfect and unceasing Bliss, when Time shall be no more, and Eternity shall reign. The same fervent piety, the same uprightness of heart, and the same meek and modest Spirit cherished in us, will equally insure for us the same inestimable Blessing of being Highly Favoured of The MOST HIGH. And though the Exalted Office to which Mary was Appointed, or of being associated with her as Joseph was, belong not to any of us, yet if we nourish in our hearts the Spirit, that was in CHRIST JESUS, (and which The HOLY SPIRIT is ever Ready and Willing to Generate within us,) we may, and indeed assuredly shall (for He, Whose Promise never Fulleth, hath Declared it) *find Favour in His Sight, with Whom is Plenteous Redemption, in Whose Presence is Fulness of Joy, and at Whose Right Hand are Pleasures for evermore.*

The Encouragement offered to Mary, under her intimation of her Virgin state, was such, as marked the Angel to be a Minister of Grace, and acquainted with the Deep Designs of The ALMIGHTY FATHER of the Universe in the Great Work of Man's Redemption. He exhorts her not to yield to that quality

'fear, which is the foretaste of calamity; but, repeating the avowal, that she had found Favour with GOD, leads her Soul to a sense of that perfect *love* of her DIVINE BENEFACTOR, *which casteth out fear*. The purity of mind that, midst even the pledge of matrimony, belonged to Mary, and the piety of feeling that animated her Soul, had Won for her the Signal Preference of GOD. And the rich Reward of that peace on Earth, which surpasseth the understanding of the Worldly-minded, and that hope of Heavenly Love, which the true Believers in His Word share, as the Blessed Gifts of A Good and Gracious GOD, were hers. But in the Inscrutable Ways of DIVINE PROVIDENCE, Which in the dispensations of Its Grace, Leaves nothing for the Least of Its Favourites to lack, there was Reserved for her a far more exceeding Weight of Glory, than Woman before or since has experienced, even the giving birth to The LORD of life, the Second ADAM,—Him, through Whom Alone we have hope in the promise of Life Eternal,—Him, through Whom we, who were dead in trespasses and sins, are, with repentance and faith, Regenerated unto that state of Holiness, which is the Life of GOD in the Soul of Man, and is the earnest and assurance of that Fellowship with The HOLY SPIRIT, which forms the fitness for the Joys of HEAVEN in Angels as well as Saints.

The Annunciation of The DIVINITY of That SEED, Which should Germ in Mary's Virgin-womb, must have imparted to her bosom inconceivable gratification; for She could not have been ignorant of the long expectancy amongst the Nation generally of A SAVIOUR, Who should Bring Spiritual Deliverance to faithful Israel, and Diffuse the Fruits of Truest Blessedness to all Mankind. Indeed she might, not unreasonably, have cherished the hope, that the desire which She, in common with many Thousands of the Daughters of Judah individually entertained, of being the Chosen Instrument of so Blessed a Birth might in her be Fulfilled, and the Glory become exclusively her own. But like the Jews, her Countrymen, looking for a temporal Deliverance, and savouring not of those Things That peculiarly Belong to The SPIRIT, not having the fulness of faith, that afterwards belonged to her, she in effect asks, "how a Virgin can conceive and bear a Son?" The answer of the Angel removed her doubt, and pointing to the Omnipotence of GOD, explained the Holy Mystery; avowing The DIVINITY of Him, Who, though Perfect GOD, was to be Perfect Man also, of her Flesh Subsisting, and Who would not Despise her womb; though Himself The LORD of Life, of Light, and All Things. In fervent and grateful piety of Spirit Mary submissively and readily bows to The DIVINE Dispensation, asking no further question, nor urging any other Blessing than the Confirmation of the Angel's Prophecy. The peculiarity of Mary's situation led her naturally to seek her most confidential Friend to commune with on the Great Occasion, and she had happily chosen One, who, like herself, had chosen the paths of Righteousness and true Holiness. Notwithstanding the sacred pledge she was under to Joseph, she forbears, from motives of at least excusable, if not commendable, delicacy, to acquaint him with her state: She hastens first to open her heart, and to pour out its experiences and contemplations into the ear of her sage and excellent Friend: nor was the visit fruitless; for, Taught by Inspiration, Elisabeth, the Wife of Zacharias, to whom she went, when looking upon Mary, at once beheld and acknowledged her as the *Highly Favoured of The LORD among Women*, even The Mother of The Incarnate GOD, of The SAVIOUR of Mankind. Nor was Elisabeth alone the Prophetess and Welcomer of Mary's coming Honours; the infant Baptist in her womb saw with a Seraph's eye that the Glory of The LORD had Descended on her, and he added his Inspired testimony to That DIVINITY, Which was yet a Minor Embryo in Mary's womb. To the Latter's modest mind and faithful heart, how unspeak-

ably acceptable must have been these strong confirmatory evidences of The ALMIGHTY'S Selection of her; and how imitably beautiful and admirable are the pious effusions of her Soul, to which this countenance of her condition and this further confirmation of her hopes gave rise. Her first thought is to give Glory to GOD, and to raise her Spirit in pious joy and gratitude to Him for His Goodness, calling HEAVEN to Witness the meekness of her heart; and Prophetically proclaiming, that, through such Especial Manifestations of DIVINE Favour, her own, and all future Generations, should pronounce her "Blessed," as bearing That Precious SEED, Which should Bruise the Serpent's (Satan's) head; and through Which all the Families of the Earth should be Blessed. THE LORD JEHOVAH She devoutly confessed to be her Strength; and Him, therefore, She justly made the Subject of her Song. And from her own experience of His Tender Compassion and Loving-Kindness, as the Reward of that reverential fear which in her heart She felt, and in her Life She practised, toward The Great and Gracious AUTHOR of her Being, She encourages to the general adoption and pursuit of the same holy principle. Regarding, moreover, the previous low estate of herself and Cousin, in comparison with the many high and lofty Dames and Daughters of Judah, who were, perhaps, severally looking with eager but unhallowed desire to be the Parent of the Promised MESSIAH, at this time so generally expected, but Whose Character was mistakingly calculated upon as a great Temporal Prince, She invites, as it were, All to confess the Righteous Judgments of The LORD, and that His Wisdom and Power are Equal; concluding this memorable Hymn with a reference to the Prophetic Revelations of *A SAVIOUR, Who should Redeem Israel*; and owning that *Now was the Accepted Time; that Now was the Day of Salvation!* The song of Hannah, recorded in the 1st Book of Samuel, ch. ii, is an excellent companion to the Virgin's Hymn, and, independently of their intrinsic merit as effusions of the purest piety, they afford highly interesting specimens of Inspired Poetry.

△ The birth and baptism of John: the joy manifested thereat by Elisabeth's many Friends, and the avowal of Zacharias when recovering his suspended speech on the latter event, are circumstances strongly corroborative of the fidelity of the Christian History. The Priests were, in general, as will be seen, the most inveterate Opposers of the Christian Dispensation: that a Member of their Order should have been so Supernaturally Dealt with, must have been matter of general notoriety, and, doubtless, was somewhere made matter of record. It will be recollected in the narrative of it (before given from St. Luke), that Zacharias, in the first impulse of his Soul, on recovering his power of utterance, poured forth that voice in praises to his GOD. THE LORD had Given, The LORD had Taken away, but The Same LORD had also Restored His Free Gift; and Blessed, therefore, on every account Blessed, in his estimation, was the Name of The LORD! How just and becoming is it that the earliest exercises of the speaking faculties should be dedicated in pious homage to GOD, their GIVER; and that every Child should be taught and encouraged to lisp its MAKER'S Praise!

The impression so generally made by the birth of John, and by the peculiarities attending it, confirms the general looking-for of some Great and Eventful Deliverance at this particular crisis. Astonishment at the occurrences, and an eager desire to know whither they were to tend, pervaded far and near. To dispel the prevailing apprehensions, and allay any spirit of contention amongst the Friends of Elisabeth and Mary, Zacharias, clothed with the mantle of Inspiration, and having the Book of Futurity laid open to him, published its important and interesting Truths abroad. Upon his Spiritual eye Beams the Day-Star from On HIGH, and the Glorious Light is Reflected on All around,

ho did not perversely hide themselves from It. Notwithstanding the honoured office of Zacharias, and the general joy expressed on the Miraculous birth to him of a Son, he deceives not the People by his silence as to the inferiority of that, his own Son, to Him, Who, Coming after him, should be Preferred before him; but exults with a Saint-like satisfaction at the secondary Privileges bestowed on his Offspring, knowing that amongst All of Human Kind, None could be greater in the Sight of GOD than John the Baptist. To the Gifted contemplation of Zacharias the whole Scheme of Redemption must have been made Manifest, as far as finite Understanding could comprehend It; for unto the hidden Mysteries Angels still desire to look; and, though gradually Unfolding Itself to them, the Great Work of Man's Redemption will not, perhaps, be fully Obvious even to their exalted faculties, until the Consummation of all things, and the Final Judgment upon all Men; when the Joys of Everlasting blessedness shall be the Adjudged Reward of the Faithful in CHRIST JESUS. After surveying This Stupendous and most Glorious Fabric of The MESSIAH'Searing, even The Temple of Holiness unto The LORD for the Assemblage of the Saints, and the Precious Treasures that are Reserved Therein for the Penitent and Believing, Zacharias bursts forth in devotional rapture, praising the SOURCE of Such Transcendant Goodness and Loving-Kindness. The tongue of Prophecy is again heard in Jerusalem; and ere our SAVIOUR'S birth, and when His Forerunner was scarcely more himself than an Embryo, the Great Truth is aloud proclaimed, that *GOD had Visited and Redeemed His people*; and the due incense of Praise to Him is therefore offered up. The former Prophecies, Which were sacredly regarded as the Oracles of Faith, and Which were treasured up as inestimable Depositories of the Mercies Promised from Above, were corroborated in the important avowal that the KINGDOM of HEAVEN was at hand; that The SUN of RIGHTEOUSNESS was about to rise with Healing on His Wings; that The SEED of David, in Which all the families of the Earth were to be Blessed, was About to Take Root downwards, and to Bear Fruit upwards; and to use another simile, The Tree, the Leaves of Which were for the Healing of the Nations, was with Its Branches, Stretching forth unto the Rivers, and Its Boughs unto the Sea, to be a Refuge from the storm, a Shadow from the heat, and to Communicate Nourishment unto All, who would come unto It; uniting in Itself, and Imparting unto All, who are freely Invited to partake of It, the Fruits both of the Tree of Knowledge, and of the Tree of Life, that grow in the Paradise of GOD. The DIVINE Work, so beyond all estimation Profitable to Man, of his Soul's Redemption from the punishment and power of sin, and of that unspeakably Higher Blessing, The DIVINE Reconciliation and Favour (in Which are comprehended the attainment of Life Eternal, and the association with it of the Fulness of Spiritual Joy and Heavenly Pleasures without measure and without end, and that too, in communion with Seraphs and with Saints amidst the Visual Glories of THE GOD-HEAD,) is acknowledged to be already Begun; for to the mind of Zacharias this DIVINE Scene was Exhibited; and he exultingly proclaims Its reality abroad. The Great Fruits and Glorious Result of a Vital Faith Therein he cherishes and inculcates; urging, as the most important of all Truths, that since GOD had so Dealt with His People, they ought, if Such Works of Love and Mercy were to be finally Beneficial to them, to *serve Him in singleness of heart, and in holiness and righteousness all the days of their Lives*. And What the HOLY SPIRIT Said by the mouth of Zacharias unto the Israelites in the temple, He hath Graciously Vouchsafed to Inspire the Record of for our Admiration, that, as the Blessing of Salvation is Held also out to us, we should comply with Its indispensable Condition of serving GOD Acceptably, and with a holy

fear, walking in the paths of Righteousness to the end of our days. After tributary offering of Infinitely Merited Praise to The AUTHOR of Such Goodness and Mercy, the holy Parent, with a joy beaming on his brow, with a melting at the warmth of his impassioned feelings, looks on his Child, proclaims him the Messenger of Eternal Peace, the Forerunner of The MESSIAH, and the Chosen Instrument to proclaim His Glorious Advent, and prepare His People for the KINGDOM of HEAVEN, by *turning the hearts the Disobedient to the wisdom of the Just*; giving him the exalted appellation *the Prophet of The HIGHEST*; thus designating his Office in words, which too clear and forcible not to be weakened by any paraphrase, "*for thou shalt before the Face of The LORD to prepare His Ways; to give knowledge of Salvation unto His People by the Remission of their sins, through the Tender Mercy of our GOD; Whereby The DAY-SPRING from On HIGH hath Visited us Give Light to them, that sit in darkness and in the shadow of Death; to Guide feet into the way of Peace.*"

That it might be Fulfilled, may, according to various Commentators upon the original Text, be read, "Whereby it was Fulfilled:" the Prophecy of Isaiah was indeed, to the letter, Fulfilled; for at this time, and in the only time with the history of Human Kind, a *Virgin did conceive and bring forth a SON, Who was, and, to the unspeakable Consolation and the inestimable Benefit of Faithful in all ages, is, GOD with us.*

The resignation and submissiveness, the piety and meekness of Joseph shew him to have been worthy of the Blessed Virgin's choice, and of being Foster-Father of the lowly JESUS. Doubts whether he had Children of his own by Mary, after she had brought forth her First-Born, are raised; but it is not of importance to pursue the inquiry.

The Circumcision and the Presentation and Offering in the Temple, prove both Mary and Joseph's desire to fulfil all Righteousness, by a conformity to the Law of Moses, so long as that remained unrepealed by the more Spirit Service of The Gospel. For the time was to come when *neither Circumcision nor Uncircumcision should avail any thing, but a New Creature.*

△ CHAP. ii.—Now when JESUS was Born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of Herod the King, behold, there came wise Men from the East to Jerusalem, saying, "Where He, That is Born KING of the Jews? for we have seen His Star in the East, and come to worship Him."—1 and 2.

That the expectation of the Advent of MESSIAH was not peculiar to the Jews, but was in a degree extended over Gentile Nations also, is inferable from this devout and watchful spirit amongst the most profoundly Learned of other Countries eastward of Judea. With them the Prophetic Writings of the Jews had been the Subject of deep study and reflection, and the Great Truths and Precious Promises They promulgated and contained, were treasured in their hearts, and influenced their conduct. It was not in a tame and inactive spirit that they received the Tidings of A Coming MESSIAH,—they did not remain idly at home, waiting there His Presence, if It Offered; neither did they content themselves with the purpose of offering to Him, if He Came, of that, which comparatively would cost them nothing; but with a holiness of heart and liveliness of faith, that won for them The DIVINE Favour, and obtained for them an Especial Revelation from On HIGH, in the animating guidance of an extraordinary Star, they hailed its directing course; and, laden with treasures as a tributary offering, they went from their native Land to enter as Strangers and Pilgrims the Country, which was so peculiarly distinguished, as to bear That SEED of Abraham and of David, in Which all the Families of the Earth were to

Blessed. And they travelled on under the faithful observance of that Star, till they came to the Town and humble spot of the Nativity of The SAVIOUR; where they not only did Him honour, as the Future KING of the Jews, but they *worshipped* Him as The LORD of Jews and Gentiles, and as The REDEEMER of an otherwise lost and hopeless World. To Him, therefore, did they bear, not only tribute, but testimony that JESUS, though Born of the Flesh, was verily and indeed GOD.

St. Luke does not notice this votive dedication, but his confirmation of the fact of the Birth Place of our SAVIOUR is thus narrated, *Joseph went up from Galilee, out of the City of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the City of David, which is called Bethlehem, (because he was of the House and Lineage of David,) to be taxed with Mary, his espoused Wife, being great with Child.*—Luke ii, 4, 5. But though St. Luke does not notice the homage offered by the Spiritually-Gifted Travellers from the East, he beautifully details the Embassy from the Heavenly Regions to Announce the Important Event of The Great REDEEMER'S Coming to Deliver a fallen World from the grasp of Satan, as before extracted.

When Herod, the King, had heard these Things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the Chief Priests and Scribes of the People together, he demanded of them "Where CHRIST should be Born?" And they said unto him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for Thus it is Written by the Prophet, [Micah v, 2,] 'And thou, Bethlehem, in the Land of Juda, art not the Least among the Princes of Juda; for out of thee shall Come A GOVERNOR, That shall Rule My People Israel.'"—3 to 6. △

What an extraordinary degree of wilful blindness is here manifested by the Scribes and Priests, to whom the Writings of the Prophets were most familiar. Yet, though they professed, by the aid of Those DIVINELY Inspired Writings, to discern the Signs of the Times, which were then peculiarly momentous, and actually pointed out to Herod, where JESUS should be Born, they nevertheless perversely closed their eyes against the equally distinct Annunciation of the purely Spiritual Character of His KINGDOM; and the Universally Benevolent Aim of His Wondrous and Condescending Mission! That Herod, a Heathen, in Spirit at least, should be jealous of being deposed was only natural, when the birth of a King within his Territory or Government was sounded in his ear. But that Men, who had all the Manifestations of The DIVINE Intercession Pressed upon them by the continued reading from their Prophets, and who should, therefore, have hushed the fears of Herod, by advising him of the real and peaceful Character of The New Born and long Promised MESSIAH, is truly surprising, and argues an influence of Spiritual pride bent on rejecting the humbling Tenets of The Coming Gospel. They not only deceived Herod by their silence in this respect, but led him, probably, to the thought of the diabolical scheme of Self-preservation to which, as we shall afterwards find, he had recourse, under the influence of his coward fears. Such is but too surely, though varying in degree, the sad effect, both direct and indirect, of yielding the mind to pride and the heart to perverseness. But the Priests, who are such in faith and in holiness, are especially Blest, as being the Appointed and willing Messengers of The LORD of HOSTS, freely making known unto All all the Revelations Imparted to them; *in their mouth is the Law of Truth, and in their lips iniquity is not found; in peace and equity they walk; and, so far from causing Any to stumble at the Law, they turn Many away from the pursuit of evil.*—[See Malachi ii, 6.]

Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise Men, inquired of them diligently "What time the Star appeared?" And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, "Go and search diligently for the young Child; and when ye have found Him, bring me word again! that I may come and worship Him also!" When they had heard the King, they departed; and lo, the Star, which they saw in the East, went before them, till it came and stood over where the Young CHILD was. When they saw the Star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the Young CHILD with Mary His Mother, and fell down and worshipped Him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto Him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. And being Warned of GOD in a dream, that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own Country another way.—7 to 12.

Such deep root had jealousy and apprehension taken of Herod's heart, that, not satisfied with consulting the reputed Oracles of The DIVINE MIND, the Priests and Scribes, and having heard of The DIVINELY Directed Mission from the East, he calls the Instruments of It into his presence, and seeks at the fountain head their sense and interpretation of the rumoured Revelation. These Messengers practised no artifice; but disclosed frankly the circumstances as they occurred; having no suspicion that any improper use would be made of the communication, and, doubtless, felt encouraged in their votive purpose by Herod's pledge to do homage to The GOD of their worship. It is remarkable that Gentiles were the first Society that in communion adored The SAVIOUR of the World: though He was of the Seed of David, and was primarily Sent to the lost Sheep of the House of Israel. How humble must have been these holy Men of wisdom to break forth at once into joy, and to spread forth their tribute offerings of costliness at the sight of The MESSIAH, though Clothed in Mortality, and Exposed to all the feebleness and helplessness of Human Infancy, and with only the habitation of cattle to Shelter Him; manifesting, thereby, a faith how strong, and a love how pure! But what an instance of hellish hypocrisy did Herod exhibit in professing a desire to worship Him, Whom it was his secret purpose to sacrifice at the shrine of envy! The offering of the Wise Men, the first fruits of Faith, and the appearance of the Star as their Conductor to the Presence of our SAVIOUR, are circumstances which may seem to be partly alluded to in this Prophecy of Isaiah, so beautifully admonitory to All to fall down before Him and do Him homage: *Arise! shine! for thy Light is Come; and the Glory of The LORD is Risen upon thee; for, behold, the darkness shall cover the Earth, and gross darkness the People; but The LORD shall Arise upon thee; and His Glory shall be Seen upon thee; and the Gentiles shall come to Thy Light, and Kings to the Brightness of Thy Rising. They shall bring gold and incense.*—Isa. x, 1, 2, 3, and 6.

△ And when they were departed, behold, the Angel of The LORD appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Arise, and take the Young CHILD and His Mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there, until I bring thee word; for Herod will seek the Young CHILD to destroy Him!" When he arose, he took the Young CHILD and His Mother by night, and departed into Egypt; and was there until the death of Herod, that it might be Fulfilled, Which was Spoken of The LORD by the Prophet, [Hosea xi, 1,] saying, "Out of Egypt have I Called My SON." Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the Wise Men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the Children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the Coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time, which he had diligently inquired of the Wise Men. Then was Fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the Prophet [xxxix, 15,] saying, "In Rama was there a Voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning; Rachel weeping for her Children, and would not be comforted, because they are not."—13 to 18.

Joseph's entire resignation to the Will and Appointments of GOD, in this instance also, prove further the felicity and judiciousness of Mary's choice of

him; and his readiness to leave the Land of his Fathers, even for that Kingdom where so many of them had endured bondage, and where the worship of The One True GOD gave place to idolatry, is deserving of marked consideration, more especially when, to Human conception, it might seem to damp, if not deaden the hope of That SOVEREIGNTY over Judea, which had been Promised, though by Angels, to his adopted CHILD. That The ALMIGHTY should not at once, with the Breath of His Nostrils, have Blasted the Blasphemer Herod, would have struck the mere reasoning power of Man with surprise, when the very continuing of the New Born MESSIAH on Earth might have seemed endangered by the protraction of so worthless and incorrigible a Life as that of Herod. But Man seeth not as GOD Seeth. It is true the Prophecy in Hosea, *Out of Egypt have I Called My SON*, may have been present to the mind of Joseph and Mary, and contributed to administer to them Consolation from their application of It to their Wonderful CHILD, and from their pious confidence in Its Fulfilment, as Emanating from Him, Whose Word is Truth.

What a diabolical Spirit must have prompted to Herod's mind, amidst the deep turpitude of his heart, a measure so fraught with cruelty and execration to his name in all future ages, as the sacrifice of such numbers of Innocents, and the agonizing, to a pitch beyond the pangs of death, the bosoms of so much Paternal and Maternal tenderness and natural feeling. The Infants themselves were early and happy Martyrs in the Cause of CHRIST; a Fate devoutly to be wished; for of Such is the Kingdom of HEAVEN. To this Goal of Consolation the Prophet Jeremiah was Graciously Permitted to point, after predicting the anguish that awaited many of the Daughters of his beloved Country, when he thus declared the Healing Balm, That was Reserved for that Country's sores. *Thus Saith The LORD, "Refrain thy voice from weeping and thine eyes from tears! for thy work shall be Rewarded," Saith The LORD, "and they shall come again from the Land of the Enemy."*—Chap. xxxi, 16. Thus doth The ALMIGHTY, Who Delighteth in Mercy, with Chastisement administered in Judgment, Reserve for the Faithful a Joy, that for the greatness thereof turns into forgetfulness all their past sorrow; and in the end the Peace they experience in His Love through CHRIST, surpasseth the conception of All who taste not of it. Kindred affection is creditable to our Nature; and Maternal love, which is happily peculiarly strong, if wisely directed and moderated, is amongst the Best of GOD'S Providential Gifts to us on Earth; for to that we owe, not only the protection of us in infancy, but often the acquirement of our first moral and religious impressions. And amidst the Shining Light of the Gospel, no Mother, though for a season bereaved of the Fruit of her womb in its state of infant innocence, need doubt that its Angel or Spirit stands Accepted, through CHRIST, before the Throne of GOD.

But when Herod was dead, behold, an Angel of The LORD appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, "Arise, and take the Young CHILD and His Mother, and go into the Land of Israel; for they are dead, which sought the Young CHILD'S Life!" And he arose, and took the Young CHILD and His Mother, and came into the Land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judea in the room of his Father, Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being Warned of GOD in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee; and he came and dwelt in a City called Nazareth; that it might be Fulfilled Which was spoken by the Prophets, "He shall be Called a Nazarene."—19 to 23.

With a conscience how burthened must, on reflection, the last hours of Herod's Life have been attended, if he believed in a Future State of Rewards and Punishments! Of what folly must he have acknowledged himself to have been guilty, when sentencing Hundreds of unoffending Fellow-Mortals to death, and



spreading mourning and desolation and woe throughout a whole Region, in the fruitless hope of preserving an earthly crown, which Death in any instant could, and very shortly afterwards actually did, wrest from him for ever! Even Heathen ignorance could not shroud the dying hour from the bitter chidings of inhuman cruelty.

The DIVINE Injunction on Joseph was to return to the Land of Israel generally, no particular part being pointed out; but it is natural to suppose that the pilgrimed Couple looked fondly towards their own home and Kindred and Tribe. Of this natural longing fear came in aid, and under their united influence, Joseph ventured to leave the Land of Israel for that of Judea, and to return to his long alienated home. On the Evangelist's authority we are led to understand that though this may seem to have been a departure from the express mandate of the Angel, it nevertheless Fulfilled the prediction of more than one Prophet. But on his authority we must rest this belief; for in such Scriptures as have come down to us, we do not trace any such express Revelation. An allusion is made in St. Jude to the Prophetic Spirit of Enoch, and yet none of his prophecies have reached us. This may have been the case with other Prophets since his time, or the *whole* of the Prophecies of many of those Prophets, whose names are peculiarly endeared to us by the possession of such of their Works as have come down, may be yet unknown to us. With reference to this, our SAVIOUR'S short connection with Nazareth, allusions are sometimes made to Samson and to Samuel, both of whom were of Nazareth: and the xiii chapter and 5 verse of Judges, and the i chapter of 1st Book of Samuel, and 11 verse, may be consulted to trace the imagined Types of our SAVIOUR, which by some Commentators are attached to those Passages.

△ St. Luke's more comprehensive Narrative of the early Incidents of our SAVIOUR'S Life on Earth is thus: *And when they (Joseph and Mary) had performed all things according to the Law of The LORD, they returned into Galilee, to their own City Nazareth. And The CHILD (JESUS) Grew and Waxed Strong in Spirit, Filled with Wisdom, and the Grace of GOD was upon Him. Now His Parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover: and when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the Feast; and when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, The CHILD JESUS Tarried behind in Jerusalem: and Joseph and His Mother knew not of it: but they, supposing Him to have been in the Company, went a day's journey: and they sought Him among their Kinsfolk and Acquaintance: and when they found Him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking Him. And it came to pass, that after three days they found Him in the Temple, Sitting in the midst of the Doctors, both Hearing them, and Asking them Questions. And All, that heard Him, were astonished at His Understanding and Answers. And when they saw Him, they were amazed; and His Mother said unto Him, "Son, why hast Thou thus dealt with us? behold, Thy Father and I have sought Thee sorrowing!" And He Said unto them, "How is it, that ye sought Me? Wist ye not that I must be about My FATHER'S Business?" And they understood not the Saying, Which He Spake unto them. And He Went down with them, and Came to Nazareth, and was Subject unto them. But His Mother kept all These Sayings in her heart. And JESUS Increased in Wisdom and Stature, and in Favour with GOD and Man.—Luke ii, 39 to 52.*

The Instance of early and surprising Wisdom and Devotedness to His HEAVENLY FATHER'S Cause, even at the expense of a pang to His Earthly Mother's breast, is Consistent with the Great Object of His Advent, the Good of Mankind in general. Why the Doctors, struck as they seem to have been by the Pre-eminency of His Mental Powers, claimed Him not of His Earthly

Parents, to adopt Him and to train Him as a Member of their own Body, may appear extraordinary, even though He was not of the Tribe of Levi. But such a Course of Education was not necessary for His Purpose, nor was His Ministry according to the ceremonial rites of the Jewish Church. HE was a PRIEST for ever after another Order; and He Taught as never Man Taught, though charged with never having Learnt letters. The tender and affectionate chiding of Mary sustains the endearing estimate of her qualities and character, which should ever be held in true but sober veneration, as Foremost of Females in the Love and Countenance of GOD.

Notwithstanding the Consciousness of His Intellectual Powers, and His Fitness, even at so early an Age as twelve, to Hold Discourse on the solemn and momentous Truths of Religion, and to Teach even the most Learned Wisdom, and to Dispense Knowledge, JESUS Leaves the attractive Scene of His Spiritual and Intellectual Triumph, and in the Spirit of Meekness and Docility Accompanies His Parents to their humble home; and so Continued with them for the period of about eighteen years; during all which time the whole that remains on Historical Record of This most deeply Interesting and Important Life is, that, *Increasing in Wisdom and Stature, He Increased also in Favour with GOD and Man.* St. Luke's account, after the introductory mention of John the Baptist, as the Fore-Runner of our SAVIOUR, and the Baptism of The MESSIAH, as noticed by all four of the Evangelists, adds, *And JESUS Himself Began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the Son of Joseph:—*Luke iii, 23; as before mentioned.

CHAP. iii.—In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the Wilderness of Judea, and saying, "Repent ye, for The KINGDOM of HEAVEN is at hand!" for this is he that was Spoken of by the Prophet Esaias, saying, "The voice of One crying in the Wilderness, 'Prepare ye the Way of The LORD! Make His Paths Straight!'"—1 to 3.

As John preached repentance before CHRIST Entered on His Ministry, so should in Man repentance be the first fruit of Christian profession. All have sinned in thought, word, or deed against The DIVINE MAJESTY. Few, if any, that have not deeply wounded their own consciences by a departure from Righteousness; and Few, that have done unto their Neighbours, as they would that such Neighbours had done unto them. The nature and tendency of sin should be studied, and the knowledge arrived at by a full Self-examination in comparison with the Law of GOD, and the Goodness of His Providence, the Abundance of His Mercies, and the Graciousness of His Promises Vouchsafed unto All. And though No One can tell how oft he offendeth, since we err by withholding, as well as misdirecting our powers: yet much may be done towards the discovery and detection of sin, however unheeded at the time of committal, by contemplating the Purity and Holiness and Beneficence of The DIVINE NATURE, and considering how little we have acted after such an Example, and how little have we kept Him before our eyes in the direction of our conduct and the regulation of our thoughts. As the first step to take, in this indispensable work of repentance, is therefore to possess our minds, as far as is possible for Human conception to reach, with just and becoming notions of The Nature and Attributes of GOD, so far as They have been Revealed, or are Made Manifest by His Works, we should frequently meditate on His Greatness and Power, as The CREATOR and PRESERVER of all Things,—on His Perfection, as having Made all Things Good, yea, originally Very Good,—and on His Peculiar Love for Man, in having Constituted him so Pre-eminently the Object of His Care and the Instance of His Mercy, by Forming him in His Own Image, with a Spirit of Immortality. We should then dwell on the awful and afflictive fact,

that Man, so Favoured and associated with the Perfection of Holiness, should, by disregard to A DIVINE Command, have fallen into wilful sin, with the foreknowledge of his thereby forfeiting his State of Primeval Blessedness. Extending the thoughts to the manifold sins and wickednesses, which in all subsequent Ages have disgraced Human Nature, and incensed the Just Anger of The DEITY, we should then, with Self-condemnation, look back upon that portion, which we ourselves have added to the inconceivable weight of Mankind's iniquity; and, amidst a true consciousness thereof, and the contemplation of The DIVINE Purity, as well as Power, should acknowledge that we stand utterly condemnable, and without any reasonable hope of Restoration to DIVINE Favour, if Judgment be Pronounced upon us according to DIVINE Justice. But then laying hold of Revelation with a deep feeling of sorrow for our offences against Its AUTHOR, we should clasp to our bosoms That Promise of Pardon and Reconciliation, Which is so Graciously Made to all penitent and believing Sinners, through faith in That Mystery of DIVINE Love to Man, the Incarnation and Mediation of The Only SON of GOD, in Atonement for our sins, and in Fulfilment of The DIVINE Law for us. Truly Wonderful does The ALMIGHTY'S Forbearance seem in not utterly and at once Extirpating one Class of His Creatures for their disregard of their CREATOR and contempt of His Commandments; (and by whose Extermination from the scale of Being His Own Happiness could not in the least have been affected;) but infinitely more wonderful is it that He should Give thus His Only and Holy SON, Who is ONE with Himself, to Take upon Him our Nature, and Therein to Offer Himself up as An Expiatory Sacrifice for sin and A Propitiation for Pardon and Reconciliation to DIVINE Acceptance and Favour; at the same time Shewing us, by Example, the Paths of Righteousness, in which we should tread, and Bringing, as the First Fruits of His Mediation, the Returning Graces of The HOLY SPIRIT to Help us onward in our journey through this Life of trial and temptation, to the Glories of an Everlasting Hereafter. Incomprehensible as All This is, as Emanating from An All-Perfect, as well as ALMIGHTY BEING, yet is It capable of being, in a degree at least, brought more within our conception, than is the consciousness of deserving such Transcendent Love and Mercy from our MAKER. And, when contemplating all This, is it possible for us to refrain from an acknowledgment, in return for such Ineffable and Persevering Condescension and Inestimable Kindness, that every faculty and property of our Souls and Bodies should have been lent, without intermission and with all readiness and free-will, to the Service and Honour of The FOUNTAIN of Such unmerited Blessedness; and yet, that on the contrary, we have been ungrateful and unnatural Children to our HEAVENLY FATHER? And feeling what we ought to have been towards The AUTHOR of our Being, and admitting how miserably short we have fallen of the due discharge of our duties towards Him, should we not break forth into a lively sorrow for and repentance of these our misdoings? and should we not endeavour, with all sincerity, to amend our Lives, and to render our practice consistent with our professions? The course of these inquiries would bring us also to a knowledge of our neglect of the most essential duties to our Neighbours, as well as to ourselves. The bad example set the Former, and the possible influence which that may have had, in robbing Others of the Proffered Salvation, should increase our contrition, and contribute to our own reformation; animating us to the effort of promoting that of Those within our influence.

The KINGDOM of HEAVEN, as Connected with Mankind, Means Its Spiritual Government of the hearts of Men, through the Advent of The SAVIOUR of the World, and the Efficacy of The HOLY SPIRIT; Giving

Light and Life and Health to the Souls of the Faithful, as the Sun to the natural World. And This KINGDOM, with the exalted Liberty and Privileges Thereof, is equally now, as at the Period of Its First Proclamation, *at hand*; and is Open to Receive All, who with true Spiritual loyalty come unto It, and to Invest them with the Sacred Rights of Naturalization and Inheritance: A KINGDOM, Which no Enemy can conquer from us, and the Government of Which no Traitor can overthrow; Abounding with the Blessings of That Peace, Which Surpasseth understanding; and Yielding freely all the Vastness of Its exhaustless Treasures to Its faithful Subjects; Anticipating and Supplying all wants; and Disseminating Universal Consolation, Satisfaction, and Perfect and Perpetual Joy. This KINGDOM being *at hand* means, that It is within every One's access, who will repent and be baptized unto newness of Life in Spirit and in Truth; uniting with a right Faith a conformity of Life to Gospel Rules. The outward sign of Baptism is water, wherein to wash is to be clean; and this is the Symbol of inward purity of heart and mind, to be acquired by penitence for past sins, which have so sadly defiled the Soul, and the outward sign of that Absolution, which Faith in the Sacrifice by CHRIST JESUS, as The Atonement for sin, and The Means of Bringing in Perfect Righteousness, and Diffusing the Influence thereof through The HOLY SPIRIT, will assuredly obtain.

To prepare the Way of The LORD was not only to Proclaim His Advent in the Flesh, but to set forth the Fundamental Principles of The Doctrine, Which That LORD was more Impressively to Teach. The Road to the hearts of His Hearers was thus to be made ready for Him.

In the Gospel according to St. Mark, at its very opening, the Office of the Baptist is thus similarly mentioned: *The Beginning of The Gospel of JESUS CHRIST, The SON of GOD. As it is Written in the Prophets, "Behold, I Send My Messenger before Thy Face, which shall prepare Thy Way before Thee: the Voice of One crying in the Wilderness, 'Prepare ye the Way of The LORD! make His Paths Straight!'" John did baptize in the Wilderness, and preach the Baptism of repentance for the Remission of sins.*—Chap. i, 1 to 4.

St. Luke records that, *the Word of GOD Came unto John, the Son of Zacharias, in the Wilderness; and he came into all the Country about Jordan preaching the Baptism of repentance for the Remission of sins; as it is Written in the Book of the Words of Esaias, the Prophet, saying, "The Voice of One crying in the Wilderness, 'Prepare ye the Way of The LORD! Make His Paths Straight! Every Valley shall be filled, and every Mountain and Hill shall be brought low; and the Crooked shall be made straight; and the rough Ways shall be made smooth; and all Flesh shall see the Salvation of GOD.'"*—Chap. iii, 2 to 6.

St. John, in his narrative of the Gospel, thus mentions the testimony borne by the Baptist himself (who was baptizing in *Bethabara beyond Jordan*), in answer to inquiries from Pharisees as to his character and office, "*I am the Voice of One crying in the Wilderness, 'Make Straight the Way of The LORD!' as said the Prophet Esaias.*"—John i, 22, 23, and 28.

And this Prophetic Annunciation of the Office of the Baptist, as dimly shadowed forth in the Writings of Isaiah, was more fully developed and confirmed by his own Prophetically Inspired Father, Zacharias, as before mentioned and commented on.

And the same John had his raiment of Camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey. Then went out to him Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the Region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.—4 to 6.

The Baptist's dress and food were those of simplicity and temperance, as should be those of all Christians, especially of Ministers of the Gospel, *Be*

*temperate in all things!* was St. Paul's admonition, which is applicable to all Classes and ages in Society.

How Powerful was the Word of GOD, though Uttered in the Wilderness, to draw to Itself Multitudes of the Inhabitants of the City and Regions of Judea! The Baptist thus proved himself a becoming Forerunner of That LORD and MASTER, *Whose Word was with Power, and Who Spoke as never Man Spoke.* The injunction to confess sin, as a necessary act introductory to effectual Baptism, was essential in the highest degree, as an earnest of that Faith, which worketh by repentance and amendment of Life: for a change of heart and of habits, through a sorrow for and condemnation of the past, must have been the expected fruits of the Baptist's preaching, ere he could pledge himself for the efficacy of that Baptism to Cleanse the Soul from the Pollutions of sin, and to Fit and Prepare it for The KINGDOM of GOD. Confession of sins, particular as well as general, is the first office of a Christian Believer. A sense of unworthiness of DIVINE Regard must be strong upon the conscience of every seriously reflecting Mind; of every One, who, justly weighing the Purity and Holiness and Goodness of GOD, and the Wonder of His Mercy in the Offer of Redemption through the Expiatory Sacrifice of His SON, looks back with an honest and true heart upon the weaknesses, the follies, the negligencies, the outrages, and the ingratitude of his own past Life. And amidst the shame and inward confusion, to which unfeigned repentance gives rise, the Soul is led onward to the resolution to depart from the error of those ways, and to begin and faithfully pursue a course of amendment of Life; looking for Pardon and DIVINE Reconciliation to the Merits and Mediation of A SAVIOUR, and seeking the Sustaining and Directing Influence of The HOLY SPIRIT thenceforth to keep the narrow Way, That Leadeth unto Life Eternal.

St. Mark's description is thus: *John did baptize in the Wilderness, and preach the Baptism of repentance for the Remission of sins: and there went out unto him all the Land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were All baptized of him in the River of Jordan, confessing their sins. And John was clothed with camel's hair, and with a girdle of a skin about his loins; and he did eat locusts and wild honey.*—Chap. i, 4 to 6.

St. Paul, when in communication with Some of John's Disciples, who had been baptized only unto his baptism, said unto them, *John verily baptized with the Baptism of repentance, saying unto the People, that they should believe on Him, Which should Come after him, that is, on CHRIST JESUS.*—Acts xix, 3, 4.

St. Paul thus asserts the Ministry and Doctrine of the Baptist, adding as a proof of the efficacy of the same Doctrine, when delivered by John, *And Many, that believed, came and confessed, and shewed their deeds.*—Verse 18.

△ But when he saw Many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, "O Generation of Vipers, Who hath warned you to flee from the Wrath to Come? Bring forth, therefore, fruits meet for repentance! and think not to say within yourselves, 'We have Abraham to our Father:' for I say unto you, that GOD is Able of these Stones to Raise up Children unto Abraham."—7 to 9.

The discriminating Power of The SPIRIT is Manifested in the Distinguishing between hypocritical Professors, and real and penitent Converts. St. Matthew confines the accusation by the Baptist, of hypocrisy to the Pharisees and Sadducees, the two leading and rival Sects of the Jews. How wretchedly and wilfully blind are Those, who think by deceiving Man they can also deceive GOD, unto Whom all the secrets of the heart are open? Is it not surprising that Men, with even a spark of reason or common understanding, can suffer themselves to be so miserably misled? Repentance by word, and not in deed

and in truth, is a mockery; and must be as hateful to Him, as open rebellion. How can it be expected by any One, that GOD, Who is The GOD of Truth, will Give him Happiness Infinite and Vast beyond conception in his Immortal State, when he inwardly denies The DIVINE Authority, and sets at nought both the Omniscience and Omnipotence of The DEITY; systematically neglecting His Commandments, though, at the same time, professing before Fellow-Mortals a faith in His Word and an obedience to His Will.

In the contemplation of the Wrath to Come we must bear in mind, that the Spirit of Man dieth not with his body,—it is Immortal; and after its separation from its earthly tabernacle, it enters, in a degree at least, upon its Eternal condition,—this is either of Joy in the conscious Favour of GOD, or of misery unutterable in being driven from the Glory of The DIVINE Presence, and becoming the prey of that horror of feeling, which remorse and Self-condemnation cannot but occasion, and which all absence of hope must dreadfully deepen. The state of the Maniac affords, perhaps, a feeble image of this wretchedness, as far as a separation from the Influence of DIVINE Grace operates; and the frantic agony of the Self meditating Murderer, in the hesitation whether or not to rush unbidden on Eternity, may give some idea of the wounds which conscience will then inflict.

St. Luke thus, in almost the same words, penned this address of John, though he describes it as made to the Multitude generally, meaning, probably, the Majority of them, *Then said he (John) to the Multitude, that came forth to be baptized of him, "O Generation of Vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the Wrath to Come? Bring forth, therefore, fruits worthy of repentance! and begin not to say within yourselves, 'We have Abraham to our Father!' for I say unto you, that GOD is Able of these Stones to Raise up Children unto Abraham."*—Chap. iii, 7, 8.

St. Paul's testimony to the Truth, that Salvation from the Wrath to Come is of JESUS, is given in his 1st Epistle to the Thessalonian Converts, of whom he triumphantly thus wrote, *Our Gospel Came not unto you in Word only, but also in Power, and in The HOLY GHOST, and in much Assurance. And ye became Followers of us and of The LORD, having received the Word in much affliction, with joy of The HOLY GHOST; and ye turned to GOD from idols to serve The Living and True GOD; and to wait for His SON from Heaven, Whom He Raised from the Dead, even JESUS, Which Delivered us from the Wrath to Come.*—Chap. i, 5, 6, 9, and 10. In his Epistle also to the Romans, St. Paul writes, *GOD Commendeth His Love toward us, in that, while we were yet Sinners, CHRIST Died for us: much more then, being now Justified by His Blood, we shall be Saced from Wrath through Him.*—Chap. v, 8, 9.

Faith without works is dead. If, therefore, we profess repentance, we should bring forth fruits meet for repentance; but works without faith are unprofitable. Of works done in the spirit of a pure Faith, though of them we are only the Instruments, through the Silent but Effectual Influence of DIVINE Grace, GOD has Vouchsafed to Declare His Acceptance.

The Jews' reliance on their descent from Abraham, and as the Seed of him, in whom all the Families of the Earth were to be Blessed, was vain indeed, as manifesting a total want of that Faith, which worketh by obedience, and which was so truly exemplified in Abraham himself: their boasting, therefore, of such a Connection, was properly exposed by the honest remonstrance of the Baptist.

Our SAVIOUR Himself Said to the Jews, who boasted to Him, that they had Abraham to their Father, *If ye were Abraham's Children, ye would do the works of Abraham.*—John viii, 38, 39.

St. Paul describes Abraham as *the Father of all them, that believe.*—Romans iv, 11. Adding that *the Promise, that he should be the Heir of the World, was not to Abraham, or to his Seed, through the Law, but through the Righteousness of Faith: for if they, which are of the Law, be Heirs, Faith is made void, and the Promise made of none effect: because the Law worketh Wrath.*—13 to 15.

The Mighty Power of GOD both in Nature and Grace, whether outwardly or inwardly Manifested, and the Ordinary Course of That Power by fixed or general Rules, is in Itself a Miracle, though heedlessly and ungratefully disregarded by Mankind: to doubt that GOD could, to any extent, Depart from These Rules would be the act of an Atheist. Man, in his animal nature, is but of the Earth, and to dust he returns, when this Life has passed away. Of stones, therefore, The ALMIGHTY, Who Created him, and Breathed into him the Breath of Life, might assuredly, had He Chosen, have Raised Children unto Abraham, and Blessed them with His Promised Blessing.

△ And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees; therefore every tree, which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire.—10.

Truth is probed to the bottom—the heart is laid open—the unprofitable, as well as the rebellious Soul shall be cut off—the neck of sin must be broke; a partial lopping of its extremities will not suffice. We must be found fruitful in faith and purity and good works; or must cease to exist in Spiritual Blessedness or Hope; and exist only in the apprehension or influence of the Wrath to Come, in never-ending flames of Self-accusation.

St. Luke uses the exact words, Chap. iii, 9, adding, *And the People asked him (John), saying, "What shall we do then?" He answereth and saith unto them, "He, that hath two coats, let him impart to him, that hath none; and he, that hath meat, let him do likewise!" Then came also the Publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, "Master! What shall we do?" And he said unto them, "Exact no more than that, which is appointed you!" And the Soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, "And what shall we do?" And he said unto them, "Do violence to no Man, neither accuse Any falsely; and be content with your wages!"*—10 to 14. Thus Men, in the different stations and occupations of Society, were called to an attention and disposedness to liberality, justice, contentedness, moderation, and charity, as Graces of the Coming Gospel, and fruits of true repentance and amendment.

I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but He, That Cometh after me, is Mightier than I, Whose Shoes I am not worthy to bear: He shall Baptize you with The HOLY GHOST, and with Fire; Whose Fan is in His Hand; and He will thoroughly Purge His Floor; and Gather His Wheat into the Garner: But He will Burn up the Chaff with unquenchable Fire.—11, 12.

How just, yet how praiseworthy and exemplary was this trait of John's humility; who, though the Appointed Messenger, and willing Servant of CHRIST, yet declared himself unworthy even to do Him the most menial Personal service! The Baptism of the heart should be by the supplicated Ablutions of The HOLY SPIRIT, and by the Penetrating and Refining Influence of Its Hallowed Flame of Grace.

As The JUDGE of all the Earth, The GOD-Man, CHRIST JESUS, hath both the Means and the Will to Discriminate between the Evil and the Good, and to Deal with them accordingly; the Latter, having faith to be Saved, will Graciously experience His Promised and never-Failing Care and Favour;

whilst the Former may as assuredly expect His Abandonment of them to never-ending Woe, in the fire of condemning conscience unquenchable.

St. Mark's Narrative is thus, *And John preached, saying, "There Cometh ONE, Mightier than I, after me; the latchet of Whose Shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose: I indeed have baptized you with water; but He shall Baptize you with The HOLY GHOST."*—Chap. i, 6 to 8.

St. Luke's is almost in the same words as St. Matthew's: *And as the People were in expectation, and all Men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were The CHRIST or not; John answered, saying unto them all, "I indeed baptize you with water; but ONE, Mightier than I, Cometh, the latchet of Whose Shoes I am not worthy to unloose: He shall Baptize you with The HOLY GHOST and with Fire; Whose Fan is in His Hand; and He will thoroughly Purge His Floor; and will Gather the Wheat into His Garner; but the Chaff He will Burn with Fire unquenchable."*—Chap. iii, 15 to 17. Adding, *And many other things, in his exhortation, preached he unto the People.*—18.

St. John, in his opening of The Gospel, proclaims that *The WORD*, (meaning CHRIST) *was Made Flesh, and Dwelt among us, and we beheld His Glory, the Glory as of The Only BEGOTTEN of The FATHER, Full of Grace and Truth:* and then goes on to say, that John bare witness of Him, and cried, saying, *This was He of Whom I spake, HE, That Cometh after me, is Preferred before me; for He was before me.*—Chap. i, 14, 15. And the Apostle then continues, *The Law was given by Moses, but Grace and Truth Came by JESUS CHRIST. And this is the Record of John, when the Jews sent Priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who art thou?" And he confessed and denied not, but confessed, "I am not The CHRIST?" And they asked him, "What then? art thou Elias?" And he saith, "I am not." Art thou that Prophet?" And he answered, "No." Then said they unto him, "Who art thou? that we may give an answer unto them, that sent us! What sayest thou of thyself?" He said, "I am the Voice of One crying in the Wilderness, "Make straight the Way of The LORD! as said the Prophet Esaias." And they, which were sent, were of the Pharisees: and they asked him, and said unto him, "Why baptizest thou them, if thou be not That CHRIST, nor Elias, neither that Prophet?" John answered them, saying, "I baptize with water; but there Standeth ONE among you, Whom ye know not, HE it is, Who, Coming after me, is Preferred before me; Whose Shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose." These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing. The next day John seeth JESUS Coming unto him, and said, "Behold The LAMB of GOD, Which Taketh away the sin of the World! This is He, of Whom I said, 'After me Cometh a MAN, Which is Preferred before me; for He was before me.' And I knew Him not; but that He should be Made Manifest to Israel; therefore am I come baptizing with water." And John bare record, saying, "I saw The SPIRIT Descending from Heaven, like a Dove, and It Abode upon Him: and I knew Him not: but He, That Sent me to baptize with water, The Same Said unto me, 'Upon Whom thou shalt see The SPIRIT Descending, and Remaining on Him, The Same is He, Which Baptizeth with The HOLY GHOST:' and I saw and bare record that This is The SON of GOD."*—John i, 17. 19 to 34.

Isaiah, who looked deeply, under DIVINE Illumination, into the Future Times, thus held out encouragement to Those, who in faith and patience possessed their Souls, *Thus Saith The LORD, That Made thee, and Formed thee from the womb, Which will Help thee, "Fear not, O Jacob, My Servant; and thou, Jewrur, whom I have Chosen! for I will Pour Water upon him, that is thirsty, and Floods upon the Dry Ground: I will Pour My SPIRIT upon thy Seed; and My Blessing upon thine Offspring."*—Chap. xlv, 2, 3.



The Last of the Prophets too, foretelling the Same Gracious Advent, so Glorious in Holiness, thus expressly portrays The SAVIOUR and His Fore-runner, "*Behold, (Saith The LORD,) I will Send My Messenger; and he shall prepare the Way before Me; and The LORD, Whom ye seek, shall suddenly Come to His Temple, even The MESSENGER of the Covenant; Whom ye delight in: Behold, He shall Come!*" Saith The LORD of Hosts. But who may abide the Day of His Coming? and who shall stand when He Appeareth? For He is like a Refiner's fire, and like Fuller's soap: and He shall Sit as a Refiner and Purifier of Silver: and He shall Purify the Sons of Levi, and Purge them as gold and silver; that they may offer unto The LORD an offering in Righteousness.—Malachi iii, 1 to 3.

St. Paul expressly points to this Spiritual Baptism, when in his 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, he writes, *For by One SPIRIT are we all Baptized into one Body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be Bond or Free; and have been all made to drink into One SPIRIT.*—Chap. xii, 13.

△ Then Cometh JESUS from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be Baptized of him. But John forbad Him, saying, "I have need to be Baptized of Thee; and Comest Thou to me?" And JESUS, Answering, Said unto him, "Suffer it to be so now: for Thus it Becometh Us to Fulfil all Righteousness!" Then he suffered Him. And JESUS, when He was Baptized, Went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the Heavens were Opened unto Him, and he Saw The SPIRIT of GOD Descending like a Dove, and Lighting upon Him: and lo, A Voice from Heaven, Saying, "THIS is My Beloved SON; in Whom I am Well Pleased."—13 to 17.

The diffidence of John was highly becoming, and consistent with his profession; and the Compliance of CHRIST with the established forms of His Country's Religion, by Submitting to the Baptism with water, though Needing no repentance, and though Foreknowing that He should be Baptized with The HOLY GHOST, Shews the propriety of a similar submission in us to the Ordinances of our Church, outwardly and inwardly.

Amidst all the DIVINE Assistances he had received, and notwithstanding the purity of his Life, and the zeal he had displayed in propagating true Religion, John felt and acknowledged himself to be poor and destitute of the perfection of Holiness, and therefore promptly said to JESUS, "*I have need to be Baptized of Thee!*"

St. Mark observes, *And it came to pass in those days, that JESUS Came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was Baptized of John in Jordan. And straightway Coming up out of the water, He Saw the Heavens Opened, and The SPIRIT, like a Dove, Descending upon Him: and there Came A VOICE from Heaven, Saying, "THOU art My Beloved SON, in Whom I am Well Pleased."*—Chap. i, 9 to 11.

St. Luke's Narrative is thus: *Many other things (besides the Advent and Purifying Power of CHRIST), John the Baptist, in his exhortation, preached unto the People. But Herod, the Tetrarch, being reproved by him for Herodias, his Brother Philip's Wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done, added yet this above all, that he shut up John in prison. Now when all the People were baptized, it came to pass, that JESUS also being Baptized, and Praying, the Heaven was Opened, and The HOLY GHOST Descended in a Bodily Shape like a Dove upon Him, and a VOICE Came from Heaven, Which Said, "THOU art My Beloved SON: in Thee I am Well Pleased!"*—Chap. iii, 18 to 22.

It is probable that the mind of this Evangelist, being full of the Higher Office of our SAVIOUR, and impressed with the infinitely more Important Baptism by The HOLY GHOST, on mentioning the Baptist John, drew quickly to the conclusion of his history, that he might go on uninterruptedly with That of JESUS: and therefore, in this place, mentioned the Former's imprisonment only;

though it is most probable that all the People, who came to be baptized in Jordan, or, at least, the majority of them, were baptized by John himself, because of the influence of his preaching on their hearts: and the expression, *when all the People were baptized*, as they were by John, means, at the same time or period when the People attending on the Baptist were baptized by him, JESUS also being (in effect, was) Baptized.

The effect of Baptism, when inwardly and heartily received as the pledge of Penitence and of a lively Faith, is to receive the Communication of the Light and Guidance and the Love of The HOLY SPIRIT; though not visibly, nor with the Audible Voice of Approbation, as in the Case of The SON of GOD; but with a Still Small Voice, That Cherisheth the good, and Chideth the evil within us; and by Its Power and Encouragement, Influences to all that is righteous, holy, and becoming.

Thus was Fulfilled that Prophecy of Isaiah, *And there shall Come forth A ROD out of the Stem of Jesse, and A BRANCH shall Grow out of his Roots; and The SPIRIT of The LORD shall Rest upon Him; The SPIRIT of Wisdom and Understanding; The SPIRIT of Counsel and Might; The SPIRIT of Knowledge and of the Fear of The LORD.*—Chap. xi, 1, 2. And, again, *Behold, My SERVANT, Whom I Uphold: Mine ELECT, in Whom My SOUL Delighteth; I have Put My SPIRIT upon Him: He shall Bring forth Judgment to the Gentiles.*—Chap. xlii, 1.

St. John, after describing the office of the Baptist, and his acknowledgment of The MESSIAH'S Infinite Supremacy, continued his evidence of CHRIST'S DIVINITY as before stated, adding, *Again the next day after, John stood, and Two of his Disciples; and looking upon JESUS, as He Walked, he saith, "Behold The LAMB of GOD, Which Taketh away the sin of the World!"*—Chap. i, 35, 36, and 29.

St. Paul, in his affecting Epistle to the Colossians, admonishing *the giving of thanks to The FATHER, Which hath Made us meet to be Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light Eternal*; adds, *Who hath Delivered us from the Power of Darkness, and hath Translated us into The Kingdom of His Dear SON.*—Chap. i, 12, 13. And St. Peter most expressly adverts to the Same Saving Truth in these important and impressive words, *For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the Power and Coming of our LORD JESUS CHRIST; but were Eye-Witnesses of His MAJESTY: for He Received from GOD, The FATHER, Honour and Glory, when there Came Such A VOICE to Him from The Excellent GLORY, "THIS is My Beloved SON, in Whom I am Well Pleased."*—2 Peter i, 16, 17.

CHAP. IV.—Then was JESUS Led up of The SPIRIT into the Wilderness to be tempted of the Devil.—1.

The next step after repentance and baptism, towards the true conversion of the heart to GOD, is abstinence and prayer; and, for this, retirement should, as much as possible, be sought; though neither is incompatible with public or active situations and duties: for fasting may be by lessening the usual quantity consumed at meals; and by abstaining from those things, which are peculiarly indulging or grateful to the palate: this may be done with a cheerful countenance, and without challenging notice from Others of our Self-denial: prayer may also be in secret, as it is more truly the action of the heart than of the lips, springing from the inmost recesses of the Soul, when real and vital. It is not that The HOLY SPIRIT Leads into Temptation, (though the Spirit of Evil may and does,) but that for the proof of our faith, and for the trial of our devotedness to GOD, He sometimes Leaves us without His Guidance and Support. The

Devil is, perhaps, the Inciter or Encourager of all our evil affections; and what greater Spiritual Enemy need we have?

St. Mark thus records the Event as occurring after the Baptism and DIVINE Acknowledgment of JESUS: *And immediately The SPIRIT Driveth Him into the Wilderness.*—Chap. i, 12.

The Leading and Driving, differing as they do in point of meaning in our own language, may have, in the Hebrew idiom and original Text, less seeming variance; perhaps "Urged" might be nearer to the true sense. Be this as it may, the Office of The HOLY SPIRIT, Which, amidst the temptations that await or beset us, ever Giveth the Means of Resistance, in any Suggestion to engage with temptation, Imparts it only to render our Faith more firm and triumphant. With this assurance we may support and comfort ourselves that with every temptation, into which The SPIRIT either Leadeth or Driveth, or Permitteth us to enter, a Way of escape is by Him Pointed out, if we will but avail ourselves of the Light and Guidance of His Grace to follow it. And even if for a season He Leave us in a state of Spiritual trial and conflict, He is yet ever Ready to Answer our prayers, if put forth to Him in fervency and in faith, through the acknowledged Merits of CHRIST, our MEDIATOR. That CHRIST, Who was Himself of The SPIRIT and UNITY of THE GOD-HEAD, was Led of The SPIRIT into temptation and direct Encounter with Satan, must have reference to the Human Part of His Inscrutable Nature, and involves one of the many Mysteries affecting His Entire Nature and Office, Which it becomes not us feeble-minded and narrow-sighted Mortals to presume to penetrate, but to acquiesce in with the meekness and humility and thankfulness of Saints, waiting with patience the full or partial Developement of Those Great Schemes of DIVINE Mercy in that change, when we ourselves shall become Spiritual and put on Immortality, and contemplate, through the endless ages of Eternity, the Wonders of Providence and Grace, in Creation and Redemption.

St. Luke's Narrative is thus: *And JESUS, being Full of The HOLY GHOST, Returned from Jordan; and was Led by The SPIRIT into the Wilderness.*—Chap. iv, 1. It must have been from our SAVIOUR Himself, probably in after Conversations with His Disciples, that a Communication of this Incident in His Early Ministry, and apart as It Occurred from Human observation, must have Proceeded. And to Accommodate Himself to their habits of interpreting the Mode of GOD'S Dealings with Mankind, He might have Used the Expression, "*Led or Driven by The SPIRIT.*" When Obadiah remonstrated with Elijah, as recorded in the 1st Kings xviii, 12, he said, *As soon as I am gone from thee, then The SPIRIT of THE LORD shall Carry thee whither I know not.* So the Prophet Ezekiel frequently uses the term "*The SPIRIT Took or Lifted me up.*"—Chap. iii, 14; viii, 3; xliii, 5; adding at xi, 24, *and Brought me in a Vision by The SPIRIT of GOD into Chaldea.* In the narrative of St. Philip's deeply interesting intercourse with the pious Eunuch of Ethiopia, at its termination it is Recorded, that *The SPIRIT of The LORD Caught away Philip, that the Eunuch saw him no more.*—Acts viii, 39. But Elijah, Ezekiel, and Philip were Men, and all these Interpositions of Supernatural Aid were not for trials of their faith, or for manifestation of their obedience. Our SAVIOUR'S being Led or Driven, or even Urged by The SPIRIT, was to Encounter Satan, in his strongest holds, and for our sakes to Triumph over him. St. Mark goes on to say, *And JESUS was in the Wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan, and was with the wild beasts: and the Angels ministered unto Him.*—Chap. i, 13.

And when He had Fasted forty days and forty nights, He was afterwards an Hungered. And when the Tempter came to Him, he said, "If Thou be The SON of GOD, Command that these stones be made bread!"—2, 3.

It is only or chiefly in the depth of meditation that the hunger for Spiritual Food is felt.

Temptations frequently present themselves in such plausible shapes, that without attention to the motives of our actions, the main spring under DIVINE Influence of all virtue, we are liable to be seduced by them, without scarcely being aware of our danger, or feeling sufficient consciousness of the sin of neglecting to guard even our thoughts, or to shape them by Scriptural Rule. In this instance JESUS, (Who was with The FATHER before all Worlds, and by Whom All Things were Made,) being in His Adopted Human Nature Subject to like passions as we are, yet without sin, Felt the cravings of hunger, and was only Recommended to change by the Power, That Belonged to Him, stones into bread, when in a Desert, and Remote from all Human supply; but then it was at the suggestion of the Fiend of iniquity, a Compliance with which might have argued an impatience under Privations Appointed from On HIGH. The subtlety of the temptation was also great, for it was laid so as to enlist the most prevailing passion in Human Nature—pride, on its side. *If Thou be The SON of GOD, Command, &c.*, for the Devil knew the quickness with which Man asserts his imagined or assumed rights, and his forwardness to avow any property or character of distinction belonging to him.

St. Luke's account corresponds with St. Matthew's, being thus: *JESUS was forty days tempted of the Devil: and in those days He did Eat nothing; and when they were ended He afterwards Hungered; and the Devil said unto Him, "If Thou be The SON of GOD, Command this stone, that it be made bread!"*—Chap. iv, 2, 3.

But He Answered, and Said, "It is Written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every Word, That Proceedeth out of the Mouth of GOD.'"—4.

*It is Written*, instancing the importance of not only reading GOD'S Word, but seeking the Assistance of His SPIRIT for Grace to understand and apply It on all appropriate occasions.

*Man shall not live, &c.* Unquestionably he shall not, for the bread of this Life is more perishable than this Life itself; but the Bread of Heaven, Which is the Ever-Flowing Grace of GOD, Endureth unto Life Eternal: It hath the Promise too of the Life that is, as well as of That to Come. It is the Fruit of a meek and patient Spirit, and of a pure and perfect obedience to the Will and Word of GOD, and of a lively faith in the Efficacy of His Blessed SON'S Merits and Mediation. The Words Uttered by our SAVIOUR were a Scriptural Quotation, and originally delivered by Moses as a portion of his earnest and SPIRIT-Prompted Exhortation to the Israelites before their entrance into their Promised Land, reminding them that *The LORD GOD had Led them forty years in the Wilderness to Humble them and to Prove them, to Know what was in their heart: but He Humbled them, and Suffered them to hunger; and had Fed them with Manna, which neither they nor their Fathers had before known, to the Intent, he added, that He might Make them know that Man doth not live by bread only, but by every Word, That Proceedeth out of the Mouth of The LORD doth Man live.*—Deut. viii, 2, 3.

The Bread of Life consisteth of every Word, &c. Not one, therefore, is to be disregarded or deemed Unprofitable or Unimportant.

St. Luke's narrative is similar: *And JESUS Answered, Saying, It is Written, "That Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every Word of GOD."*—Chap. iv 4.

△ Then the Devil taketh Him up into the Holy City, and setteth Him on a pinnacle of the Temple, and saith unto Him, "If Thou be The SON of GOD, Cast Thyself down ! for it is Written, 'HE shall Give His Angels Charge concerning Thee ; and in their hands they shall bear Thee up, lest at any time Thou Dash Thy Foot against a stone.'" JESUS Said unto Him, "It is Written again, 'Thou shalt not tempt The LORD thy GOD !'"—5 to 7.

The Devil, thus baffled in an attempt upon the Faith of CHRIST through the Human passion of pride, only changes his ground, and tries to assail Him, not through that passion singly, but connectedly with presumption, or a confidence in Self-Righteousness ; and in this attempt Satan manifests a more active power, having before only accosted JESUS, but now taking Him up into the Holy City. From this may be gathered, that in the most sacred of Places, the House of Prayer, yea, even in the most exalted Station in it, the Pinnacle of the Temple, the heart is open to temptation, and can alone be effectually guarded from its influence by fervently supplicated and thankfully used Grace, and the Word of GOD. *If Thou be:* the same subtle device continued. *For it is Written.*—Satan himself quoting Scripture shews that, to utter the Word of GOD, or professedly to believe in It, is not enough for a true Servant of GOD ; and that obedience must mix with it, and be the fruit of such knowledge, to be profitable towards Salvation.


How deeply artful was this scheme for seduction and the overthrow of Man's only Means of Salvation ! The Devil knew that the Words, he quoted, Referred to CHRIST, and Him only ; but he knew also that *that* was not the Season for their being Verified. The truly Faithful, and Such as indeed possess their Souls in patience, are never off their guard ; but on all occasions, not trusting in their own sufficiency, seek the Light and Guidance of The HOLY SPIRIT, Who is ever Willing and Ready to Assist them. CHRIST would indeed have Dashed His Foot against a stone, if, at the instance of Satan, He had Descended from the Pinnacle of His Sanctity, and not Awaited the Appointed Time. *Thou shalt not tempt.*—Meaning not to Assert His Own DIVINITY by these Words, but to Enforce the observance of Them, as the Express Commandment of GOD ; and not, under any circumstances, to try to influence Him to Deviate from His Avowed Purpose, or to Extend His Peculiar and Signal Protection, when capriciously or presumptuously sought of Him.

Isaiah had beautifully declared the Providence of GOD over All, who, with meek submission to His Will, truly trust in His Gracious Word : the Prophet recording that, *Thus Saith The LORD, "When thou passest through the Waters I will be with thee ; and through the Rivers, they shall not overflow thee : when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned ; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee !"*—Chap. xliii, 1, 2. The Passage Referred to in Holy Writ by our SAVIOUR, as contained in the Writings of King David, though allowedly Prophetical of The DIVINITY, That Surrounded The HOLY JESUS, Contains also in It much of Consolation, as, in a degree, Applicable to every True Believer in his Spiritual conflict through life, *Because thou hast made The LORD, Which is my Refuge, even The MOST HIGH, thy Habitation, there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling ; for He shall Give His Angels Charge over thee, to Keep thee in all thy ways ; they shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone ; thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder ; the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet. Because he hath set his love upon Me, therefore will I Deliver him ; I will Set him On High, because he hath known My Name : he shall call upon Me, and I will Answer him ; I will be with him in trouble ; I will Deliver him, and Honour him ; with long Life will I Satisfy him, and Shew him My Salvation.*—Psalm xci, 9 to 16. If the

more subtle Adversaries of our Souls are figured in our minds in these terrors to our Bodies, how true, universally is it, that, if we make The LORD our Refuge, the Soul's Salvation, through the Mediation of The SON of GOD, and through the Benign Agency of The HOLY SPIRIT, assuredly Awaits us!

The Mosaic injunction, *not to tempt The LORD!* though directed to the Israelites of old on their advance to the Promised Land, is applicable to all People, and all ages and all seasons; and the observance of it will assist us materially in our progress towards That Spiritual Land of Heavenly Promise, Which is Reserved for Those, *who do not tempt The LORD; but diligently keep His Commandments, and the Statutes, Which He hath Appointed, and do that, which is right and good in His Sight.*—Deut. vi, 16 to 18.

St. Luke's narrative transposes, in point of order, this and the following temptations, as mentioned by St. Matthew: the account by the former Evangelist is thus: *And he (the Devil) brought JESUS to Jerusalem, and set Him on a Pinnacle of the Temple, and said unto Him, "If Thou be The SON of GOD, Cast Thyself down from hence! for, It is Written, 'HE shall Give His Angels Charge over Thee, to keep Thee, and in their hands they shall bear Thee up, lest at any time Thou Dash Thy Foot against a stone.'"* And JESUS Answering, *Said unto him, "It is Said, 'Thou shalt not tempt The LORD, thy GOD.'"*—Chap. iv, 9 to 12.

Again, the Devil taketh Him up into an exceeding high Mountain, and sheweth Him all the Kingdoms of the World and the glory of them; and saith unto Him, "All these Things will I give Thee, if Thou wilt fall down and worship me!" Then Saith JESUS unto him, "Get thee hence, Satan! for It is Written, 'Thou shalt worship The LORD, thy GOD; and Him only shalt thou serve!'"—8 to 10. 

A further channel of temptation sought out by the Father of all evil, was, the too prevalent spirit of Ambition in Human Nature, the thirst of power and wealth, as alike gratifying to Human pride and vanity and luxuriousness. But how dangerous such a passion is may be thus judged of from the circumstance of its being gratified only by a surrender of the Soul to iniquity, in effect, by falling down and worshipping Satan.

JESUS, at length Roused beyond Forbearance at the Hellish depravity and insolence of him, He was addressed by, Commanded him to depart, and thus own himself vanquished; still Ready in His Reply with the most appropriate Passages of Scripture, wherewith to Confront and Confound His Adversary, and Silence his arguments. *Thou shalt worship, &c.*, and that with the whole heart, and serve The LORD, thy CREATOR, with all fervency of zeal and purity of intention, neither mistrustful of His Providence, nor presuming unhallowedly on His Mercies or Favour, and not over-anxious for any thing incompatible with His Appointments or opposed to His Revealed Will.

The Mosaic Institution had thus directed the Soul of Man to its rightful worship: *Thou shalt fear The LORD, thy GOD, and serve Him, and to Him shalt thou cleave, and shalt not go after other gods; for The LORD thy GOD is a Jealous GOD.*—Deut. vi, 13, 14., x, 20, and Ex. xx, 5. Such was the admonishment of the great Law-Giver of Israel, and its effects upon the minds of his faithful Followers, as shewn by the dying advice of his Successor Joshua, in which he said, *Fear The LORD, and serve Him in sincerity and in truth!*—Chap. xxiv, 14. So also the Prophet and faithful Servant of The LORD, Samuel, who thus spake unto all the House of Israel, saying, *Return unto The LORD with all your hearts; and prepare your hearts unto The LORD, and serve Him only!*—1 Sam. vii, 3. If the heart be thus given to The CREATOR in faithfulness and truth, then, whatever temptation may present itself, the Soul will be fortified, and will refuse to yield to it; for,

amidst the consciousness of the Omnipotence and Omnipresence of JEHOVAH, the Believer in His Promise of Salvation is strong in His Might to resist the Tempter, in whatsoever shape he may present himself; and overcomes the temptation with whatever subtlety it may be offered.

St. Luke's account of this temptation is thus: *And the Devil, taking Him up into an high Mountain, shewed unto Him all the Kingdoms of the World in a moment of time; and the Devil said unto Him, "All this power will I give Thee, and the glory of them; for that is Delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it: if Thou, therefore, wilt worship me, All shall be Thine."* And JESUS Answered, and Said unto him, "*Get thee behind Me, Satan! for It is Written, 'Thou shalt worship The LORD, thy GOD, and Him only shalt thou serve!'*"—Chap. iv, 5 to 8. This Evangelist leads us to consider the Temptation of our adorable SAVIOUR to have continued through all the forty days of His Fasting in the Wilderness, and to have extended beyond that period by the manifest instances of trial to which the Human Part of His Nature was exposed. That wealth and honour are, in a large measure, the Permitted Engines of Satan's evil workings upon the heart of Man, should be continually present to the minds of Those, who possess them, that by forbearance against the abuse, and temperance in the use of them, and by deep acquaintance with the Guiding Precepts of DIVINE Revelation, the Soul may be fortified against the subtle devices of our Arch-Spiritual Enemy. It is from Holy Writ, and a heart-prompted reliance on Its Saving Truths, that every artifice of Satan may be effectually baffled and overcome: in our memories and in our inmost Souls, therefore, should we fondly and faithfully treasure Those Truths, and ever should we fly to Them for Succour and Defence in our Spiritual warfare with the World, the Flesh and the Devil.

△ Then the Devil leaveth Him; and, behold, Angels came and ministered unto Him.—11.

Thus is temptation overcome by faith and patience and Comfort of The HOLY SPIRIT. The Soul must be either in the possession of That SPIRIT, or in that of the Spirit of Condemnation; there is no middle state, no neutrality: *He, that is not with Me, is against Me, Said CHRIST.* How Great is the Condescension of our HEAVENLY FATHER, even when we do only what is our duty, and which in truth is in itself calculated to produce to us the purest happiness and most lasting enjoyment! When, from a principle of piety, we resist temptation, the Tempter fleeth from us abashed and confounded; and, if Angels be not Sent to us, the Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT is Poured into our hearts, Administering to us, amidst the hunger and thirst after Righteousness, the Bread and Water of Life freely to our Soul's unspeakable consolation, Repaying us a thousand-fold for every exercise of restraint over our passions, and forbearance over our sensual appetite, and self-denial over our pride of heart, in this short and transitory state, with an Eternal Feast of Soul in Heaven.

The Author of the Inspired Epistle to the Hebrews, in a spirit of affirmative question, asks, *Are not all the Angels of GOD Ministering Spirits, Sent forth to minister for them, who shall be Heirs of Salvation?*—Heb. i, 14. The Ministration of Angels towards Man's Salvation, and their readiness to assist in that Godly Work is a very comforting Doctrine, and, under an impression of their pure and holy Nature, and of their benevolence towards us, we should study to keep a conscience void of offence, and strive to fit and prepare ourselves for that Communion, in which Angels may delight to dwell; resting on the Assurance of the Word of Truth Itself, that *there is joy in the presence of the Angels of GOD, even over one Sinner that repenteth.* But Angels, though they should be the Objects of our purest love, as they are Holy, and so kindly affectioned towards

us, should not be made the Objects of our worship; for then should we give that to Others, who are Creatures, which is due to GOD Alone, our CREATOR, through CHRIST JESUS.

St. Luke's description of the Retirement of Satan from his subtle conflict with our LORD and SAVIOUR, is thus: *And when the Devil had ended all the Temptation, he departed from Him for a season.*—Chap. iv, 13. Thus shewing that whilst Human Kind is in this Stage of Being, it is ever open to the wiles and attacks of Satan, and though discomfited at one time, he is ever wary and watchful for an opportunity to renew his malignant and treacherous attacks.

Now when JESUS had Heard that John was cast into prison, He Departed into Galilee; and Leaving Nazareth, He Came and Dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the Sea Coast, on the Borders of Zabulon and Nephtholim; that it might be Fulfilled, which was Spoken by Esaias the Prophet, [Chap. ix, 1, 2,] saying, "The Land of Zabulon and the Land of Nephtholim, by the Way of the Sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; the People, which sat in darkness, saw Great Light; and to them, which sat in the region and shadow of Death, Light is Sprung up."—12 to 16.

The consequence of This Victory over Satan was the immediate Entry of our Blessed SAVIOUR on His Public Ministry. And thus should all assumption of the Ministry by Man be preceded by abstraction from Worldly thoughts, by Self-examination and Spiritual discipline, by repentance and reformation, by abstinence and prayer, and by subduing all the corrupt passions and desires of the heart, and all waverings and presumptions of the Soul. A corresponding state of preparation should alike be sought by All, of whatever station or degree, when arrived at the age of sober reflection, if they would benefit from CHRIST'S Gracious Mediation, and be Held in The DIVINE Estimation as Christians indeed.

*HE Departed, &c.* To have bade defiance to the temporal power of Herod, after the instance given to the exercise of it, so hostilely and inveterately opposed to the Religion, which CHRIST and His Forerunner Came to Teach, would have argued in Man presumption, and was not in the Purposes of DIVINE Council: and to have Attempted to Sow the Good Seed on a rock so barren as the heart of Herod, and Those around him, devoted to his caprices, and eager to gratify his passions, would have been more than unprofitable; JESUS, therefore, Withdrew from the influence of such incorrigible iniquity, and Departed out of Herod's jurisdiction.

The fate of John in encountering shame and imprisonment at the hands of him, whom he sought, by an honest and open exercise of his Ministerial duties, to call from darkness to Light, and from Satan to the Living GOD, rebuking even Kings for Salvation's sake, is but a prominent instance of suffering from the rude imprisonment of the tongue imposed upon those of faithful Christians, when seeking to lead Others from the ways of evil to the paths of Righteousness and Holiness of Life; for in the charitable exercise of such God-like efforts, it is but too common to meet with blasphemy and rebuke and insult from the Profligate and Abandoned. And though the example of John should be followed in striving to effectuate reform amongst the Thoughtless and Faithless and Profane (which is the truest charity,) whilst there is a ray of hope of success; yet when such labour is palpably in vain, the Conduct of CHRIST should be imitated, by withdrawing from a service not only hopeless, but calculated to increase the iniquity it would desire to lessen. And the Soul may then be solaced by retiring amongst Those, who receive CHRIST and the Good Seed of DIVINE Knowledge with gladness, and bring forth fruits, some an hundred-fold.

Though CHRIST in all Things Fulfilled the Word of Prophecy Relating to Himself, yet was it in a perfectly natural order, and the obvious Effect of His



**Own Free Will.** On going into Galilee He first Settled at Nazareth ; and afterwards Went to Capernaum, that the Good Tidings of Spiritual Peace He Brought with Him might not be Confined to one Spot, but be Spread abroad, like the oil of gladness over the whole garment, even down to the skirts, of Such, as would be Anointed of The LORD ; and that He might Fulfil the Leading Object of His Advent to Earth, That of Going about and Doing Good both for Time and for Eternity.

That the employments upon the Sea, and the effect they have on the general manners of a People engaged in them and residing on its Coasts, are not unfriendly to the reception and propagation of Christian Principles, may be inferred from CHRIST'S early Direction of His Personal Intercourse with Fishermen, Striving to Impress them with the Highest Spiritual Truths. And it is remarkable that from Persons of that occupation, Many of His Disciples and even Apostles were Chosen.

*Galilee of the Gentiles.* Thus early did CHRIST Manifest the Universality of His Merciful Mediation, and of That Wisdom He Came down from Heaven to Impart to Human Kind ; Preferring the unenlightened Heathen, as more Confident of Success with them, amidst their simple-mindedness, than with the Scribes and Pharisees, the high-taught amongst the Jews, amidst their prejudices and Spiritual pride.

*Sat in darkness.* Darkness indeed ! for The SUN of Righteousness had not, till then, Beamed with a Ray of Its Brightness on them ; and it is probable that, though in much intercourse with the Jews, they had virtually lived without GOD in the World ; the effect, perhaps, less of intentional neglect of their MAKER'S Laws, than the want of a perfect acquaintance with Them : a state indeed blissful in comparison with that, which is the consequence of wilful blindness, and the darkening the heart by criminal indulgence, or Spiritual pride ; notwithstanding the light of conviction may frequently flash upon the Soul.

*Great Light.* A Light, to Which the Sun shining in its Strength, or with all the beauty of its rising, teeming as it does with such fructifying and purifying and exhilarizing influences, is but a feeble comparison : A Light, Which Opened to the Spiritual Contemplation of a long-benighted World, all the Riches of The KINGDOM of HEAVEN, Serving as a Lamp to the feet of All, who rightfully use It : A Light, That Guides to all goodly movements in the heart of Man, and Warms and Animates it to the sensation of the truest and most enduring happiness here, in the fruits of inward peace and the hope of never-ending joy hereafter : A Light, That, at the same time, Lightened the Gentiles, and was the Glory of the People of the true Israel ; Pointing out to each the Promised Land of Spiritual and Everlasting Blessedness : A Light, Whose Brightness never faileth, Shining equally by night as by day on the Souls of the Faithful, Cheering them in the night of adversity, and Gilding all their prosperity : A Light, That Exhibits GOD, as The CREATOR, REDEEMER and SANCTIFIER of Mankind, and amidst His Holiness and Omnipotence, Shewing Him, as Long-Suffering, Full of Gentleness and Goodness, Omniscient and Everlasting : A Light, That Points to the Blessed Road Which leads to His Unbounded Favour : A Light, Which Portrays in its true character the beauty of Holiness, and effectually Unveils the deformity and hideousness of sin ; making manifest to every sober understanding, that the purest happiness is even here found in the paths of Righteousness : A Light, on Whose Springing up, the region and shadow of Death Eternal vanished from the sight of the Believer, as the Spirit of iniquity and falsehood flies at the touch of Truth.

△ St. Mark's account of this passage in our SAVIOUR'S Life is as follows :

Now after that John was put in prison, JESUS Came into Galilee.—Chap. i, 14. And immediately this Evangelist enters upon our SAVIOUR'S public Avowal of His Doctrine there, which will be afterwards considered.

St. Luke's mention of John the Baptist being thrown by Herod's order into prison, has been before ~~285554~~. This Evangelist follows up the narrative of our SAVIOUR'S Temptation, thus: *And JESUS Returned in the Power of The SPIRIT unto Galilee, (adding,) And there went out a fame of Him through all the Region round about: and He Taught in their Synagogues, being Glorified of All. And He Came to Nazareth, where He had been Brought up; and, as His Custom was, He Went into the Synagogue on the Sabbath Day, and Stood up for to Read! and there was delivered unto Him the Book of the Prophet Esaias: and when He had Opened the Book He Found the Place, where it was Written, [Isa. lxi, 1,] "The SPIRIT of The LORD is upon Me, because He hath Anointed Me to Preach The Gospel to the Poor; He hath Sent Me to Heal the Broken-hearted, to Preach Deliverance to the Captives, and recovering of Sight to the Blind; to Set at liberty them, that are bruised; to Preach the Acceptable year of The LORD."* And He Closed the Book; and He Gave it again to the Minister, and Sat down. And the eyes of all Them, that were in the Synagogue, were fastened on Him. And He Began to Say unto them, "*This day is This Scripture Fulfilled in your ears!*" And all bare Him Witness, and wondered at the Gracious Words, Which Proceeded out of His Mouth. And they said, "*Is not This Joseph's Son?*" And He Said unto them, "*Ye will surely say unto Me this proverb, 'Physician, heal thyself!' Whatsoever we have heard Done in Capernaum, Do also here in Thy Country!*" And He Said, Verily I Say unto you, "*No Prophet is accepted in his own Country. But I Tell you of a Truth, Many Widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the Heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the Land; but unto None of them was Elias Sent, save unto Sarepta, a City of Sidon, unto a Woman, that was a Widow. And many Lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus, the Prophet; and None of them was Cleansed, saving Naaman, the Syrian."* And all they in the Synagogue, when they heard these Things, were filled with wrath, and rose up, and thrust Him out of the City, and led Him unto the brow of the Hill, whereon their City was built, that they might cast Him down headlong. But He, Passing through the midst of them, Went His Way; and Came down to Capernaum, a City of Galilee, and Taught them on the Sabbath days: and they were astonished at His Doctrine; for His Word was with Power.—Chap. iv, 14 to 32.

It is probable, therefore, that our SAVIOUR Went more than once to Capernaum, and that He more than once Returned to the Neighbourhood, where He was Bred; gradually Pressing upon the attention of the Latter His Doctrine of Purity and Holiness, to Reclaim them from the errors of their ways, and to awaken in them the danger of neglecting His Call to repentance, as the only Path, through faith, to Salvation. At His Asserting Himself to be The ROCK, on Which That Salvation was Built, they took, in the pride of Human reason, offence at that Doctrine, and not only rejected His Gracious and Goodly and Soul-Healing Counsel, but in the wildness and violence of their folly, sought to persecute Him on the Outset of His Merciful Ministration even unto Death. But His Time was not yet come, and so He Avoided, for a season, the fulness of their malignant purpose, and Left them, doubtless Sorrowing deeply in His Spirit at their Fiend-like depravity. The Passage referred to in Isaiah, in the original Translation, is, *THE SPIRIT of The LORD GOD is upon Me; because The LORD hath Anointed Me to Preach Good Tidings unto the Meek; He hath Sent Me to Bind up the Broken-hearted; to Proclaim Liberty to the Captive, and the Opening of the Prison to Them, that are bound; to Proclaim the Acceptable Year*

of *The LORD*, and the Day of Vengeance of our *GOD*; to Comfort *All*, that mourn; to Appoint unto Them, that mourn in Zion; to Give unto Them Beauty for ashes; the Oil of Joy for mourning; the Garment of Praise for the Spirit of heaviness; that they might be called "*Trees of Righteousness, The Planting of The LORD*," that *He* might be Glorified.—Isa. lxi, 1 to 3.

Elijah's Mission from *The LORD* to the Widow Woman at Zerahpath, is recorded in the 1st Book of Kings, Chap. xvii, 8, &c. And the Miracle of Naaman's being Healed of leprosy in the Waters of Jordan, through the Prophetic Annunciation and Direction of Elisha, is related in Chap. v, of the 2nd Book of Kings.

△ From that time *JESUS* Began to Preach, and to Say, "Repent! for the *KINGDOM* of *HEAVEN* is at Hand."—17.

Thus Triumphant over Sin and Satan, *CHRIST* Manifested His Earnest Desire to Make Man so likewise, by Urging him to perform the reasonable condition, on which the Efficacy of The Mediation Offered depends. For He Began to Preach His Gospel, and His First Discourse was on the necessity of Repentance, as that superstructure upon Faith, which is indispensable to the completion of that Building of Man's Salvation, Whose Foundations are Laid in *CHRIST*. And the same Argument for the Production of that first principle of vital Spirituality is Used, which John, the Forerunner of The *MESSIAH*, had used, for *The KINGDOM of GOD is at Hand*: Shewing at once the harmony and accordance of Their Ministry.

St. Mark thus relates the Opening Address of our Blessed *SAVIOUR'S* Ministry: *Now after that John was put in prison, JESUS Came into Galilee, Preaching the Gospel of The KINGDOM of GOD, and Saying, "The Time is Fulfilled, and The KINGDOM of GOD is at Hand; Repent ye, and believe the Gospel!"*—Chap. i, 14, 15. In Effect Saying, The Full Light of Salvation is now Bursting upon you, be ye not faithless, but believing! and the Peace and the Joy of the hope of a Heavenly Inheritance shall be yours!

In our *SAVIOUR'S* after Instructions to His Apostles, He Directed them likewise to preach that *The KINGDOM of HEAVEN is at Hand*.—Matt. x, 7. Observations on This Doctrine have been before offered on verse 2 of Chap. iii.

And *JESUS*, Walking by the Sea of Galilee, Saw two Brethren, Simon, called Peter, and Andrew, his Brother, casting a net into the Sea; for they were Fishers. And He Saith unto them, "Follow Me, and I will make you Fishers of Men?" And they straightway left their nets, and followed Him. And Going on from thence, He Saw other two Brethren, James, the Son of Zebedee, and John, his Brother, in a ship with Zebedee, their Father, mending their nets, and He Called them. And they immediately left the ship and their Father, and followed Him.—18 to 22.

Thus is the Eye of *GOD* Ever Benevolently Intent on Those, whose hearts are susceptible of His Grace; and even in our ordinary occupations, when followed with industry and integrity, and subserviently to our higher Calling, as the Elect of *GOD*; as well as amidst our labours in that Vineyard, which yieldeth Spiritual Fruit, and that abundantly to All, who sedulously work Therein, is He with us, though we may not heed Him; and when we least think of Him, is He, although Invisibly, Present with us, and Acquainted with all our ways.

How Gracious the Invitation! Not only to Save their own Souls from the night of Spiritual darkness and error, by a removal to the Light of *DIVINE* Truth, but to be made Instrumental to the Salvation of the Souls of Others, by taking and drawing Men within the Folds of Redemption, and rescuing them from the stagnant and deadly Sea of Heathenism and Infidelity; and placing them within the vivifying Waters of Spiritual Life and Heavenly Comfort!

Nor can it be wondered at, that the Invitation was readily and at once accepted; and that the perishable good things of this Life were abandoned for the Exhaustless and Inestimable Treasures, That are Laid up in Heaven for Believers; when we consider that It was The SON of GOD Himself, though Veiled in our Nature, Who Uttered It, and, with the Wisdom and Foreknowledge That Belonged to Him, Selected the Objects for Its reception. And, Oh that the Same Invitation, Which was Given to these illiterate but simple and humble-minded Fishermen, and Which is Offered Freely unto All, whether Low or High, Rich or Poor, Learned or Unlearned, in equally effective and intelligent Terms, were as heartily and gratefully accepted! that through faith in CHRIST, and by the Help of The HOLY SPIRIT, we might not only work out our own Salvation, but might be Permitted to labour as GOD'S Ministers to bring Others within that Net, which, in a result the reverse of the Fishes' fate, Gives Life and Liberty to All, who are Taken in It.

By St. Luke a more minute description of the Means Resorted to by our SAVIOUR to Influence these Fishermen to leave their all of earthly habit and connection, and follow Him in the confidence that He would Give them Imperishable Riches, by Saving their Souls, and Making them accessory to the Salvation of Others, is thus given: *And it came to pass, that, as the People pressed upon Him (JESUS) to hear the Word of GOD, He Stood by the Lake of Gennesaret, and Saw two ships standing by the Lake; but the Fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing their nets; and He Entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and Prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And He Sat down and Taught the People out of the ship. Now when He had Left Speaking, He Said unto Simon, "Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught!" And Simon answering, said unto Him, "Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless, at Thy Word I will let down the net." And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes, and their net brake: and they beckoned unto their Partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them: and they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink: when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at JESUS' Knees, saying, "Depart from me! for I am a sinful Man, O LORD!" For he was astonished, and All, that were with him, at the draught of the fishes, which they had taken; and so was also James and John, the Sons of Zebedee, which were Partners with Simon. And JESUS Said unto Simon, "Fear not! from henceforth thou shalt catch Men." And when they had brought their ships to land, thy forsook all, and followed Him.—Chap. v, 1 to 11. Thus it appears a Miracle was Wrought by our SAVIOUR, Which Manifested the Greatness of His Power, and confirmed, in the minds of the Witnesses of It, the belief in His DIVINITY, or DIVINELY Commissioned Nature.*

St. John, after the description of our SAVIOUR'S Baptism, and the Heavenly Annunciation of His MESSIAHSHIP in the presence of John the Baptist, goes on thus: *The next day after, John stood, and Two of his Disciples, and looking upon JESUS, as He Walked, he saith, "Behold The LAMB of GOD!" And the two Disciples heard him speak, and they followed JESUS. Then JESUS Turned, and Saw them following, and Saith unto them, "What seek ye?" They said unto Him, "Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where Dwellest Thou?" HE Saith unto them, "Come and See!" They came, and saw where He Dwelt; and abode with Him that day: for it was about the tenth hour. One of the Two which heard John speak, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's Brother: he first findeth his own Brother Simon, and saith unto him, "We have found The MESSIAS," (Which is, being interpreted, The CHRIST;) and he brought him to JESUS. And when JESUS Beheld him, He Said, "Thou art Simon, the Son of*

*Jona! thou shalt be called Cephas," (which is, by interpretation, a stone Chap. i, 35 to 42. St. John then notices the special Call of Philip and Nathanael in these words: The day following, JESUS would Go forth into Galilee, Findeth Philip, and Saith unto him, "Follow Me!" Now Philip was of the City of Andrew and Peter. Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith him, "We have found Him, of Whom Moses in the Law, and the Prophet write, JESUS of Nazareth, the Son of Joseph!" And Nathanael said unto "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Philip saith unto "Come and see!" JESUS Saw Nathanael coming to Him, and Saith of "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" Nathanael saith unto "Whence Knowest Thou me?" JESUS Answered, and Said unto him, "E that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I Saw thee." Nathanael answered and saith unto Him, "RABBI, Thou art The SON of GOD: Tho The KING of Israel." JESUS Answered, and Said unto him, "Because I unto thee, I Saw thee under the fig-tree, believest thou? Thou shalt see gr Things than these!" And He Saith unto him, "Verily, Verily I Say unto Hereafter ye shall see Heaven Open, and the Angels of GOD ascending descending upon The SON of Man."—Chap. i, 43 to 51.*

Our Blessed SAVIOUR'S Insight into character, as an Attribute of DIVINITY, was thus Exemplified in His Estimate as well as of Peter's Nathanael's; and by their ready adoption of Him as their LORD and MASTER the long looked-for and ardently desired REDEEMER of Mankind. Peter an emblem of That Rock, on Which CHRIST Built His Church; manifest amidst Human infirmity, a deep repentance, and an ultimate faith not to be shaken. Nathanael was also as an Emblem of the becoming innocence of a true Convert to CHRIST, guileless as a little Child. The incident of which passed under the fig-tree, the bare mention of which wrought so instantaneous conviction in Nathanael's mind, is not so disclosed in all its circumstances as to admit of comment without conjecture; and in imaginations it is better not to indulge too confidently, but One should be led to suppose, from the conclusive Prophecy Uttered by our SAVIOUR, Which Alluded, probably, either to His Own Ascension, or to His Final Coming to Judge the Earth, with all the Angels of Heaven in His Train, that some Especial Revelation was then Vouchsafed to Nathanael, that bespoke the Near Presence of The MESSIAH. Such obedience in the Spirit of Faith to The SAVIOUR'S Call as manifested itself in His Disciples, and wrought in them, through Him, Redemption and Advancement to Glory Everlasting, will equally work in us, through the Same Gracious Mediation, the same Blissful Fruits, if, like them, we follow JESUS with faithful true hearts, leaving all that in this Life would estrange us from Him and His Ways; for He, Whose Word is Truth, hath Himself Declared that *There Man, that hath left house or Brethren, or Sisters, or Father, or Mother, or 1 or Children, or Lands, for His Sake and the Gospel's, but he shall receive hundred-fold; and in the World to Come Eternal Life.*—Mark x, 29 to 30.

△ And JESUS Went about all Galilee, Teaching in their Synagogues, and Preaching the Gospel of The KINGDOM; and Healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the People. And His Fame went throughout all Syria; and brought unto Him all sick People, that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with Devils, and those which were lunatic, and that had the palsy; and He Healed them. And there followed Him great Multitudes of People from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judea from beyond Jordan.—23 to 25.

With what Zeal did The Blessed JESUS Prosecute His Gracious Mission on Earth, not only Inculcating the Pure Precepts of His Religion in the S

gogues throughout Galilee, Delivering Glad Tidings of His Salvation by the Coming of His KINGDOM, but Manifesting the Benevolently Active Principles of Vital Charity as the inseparable companion of true Faith, by Going about Doing Good, Healing the Sick and Restoring the Diseased, Thereby Setting us a Glorious Example, Which, to the utmost of our power, and as we severally have opportunity, we should follow; and though the same instantaneous effect may not be produced by our exertions, the same power neither belonging, nor being Communicated to us, yet much may be done to alleviate the infirmities of the body, to sooth the sufferings or sorrows of the mind, and still more towards healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease amongst the Souls of Others; an office which is infinitely more truly charitable than attention confined to physical ills, though in doing the one, as the weightier matter, we should not leave the other undone.

O that All, who are sick unto Spiritual death, would suffer themselves to be brought to The Great PHYSICIAN of Souls; and would submit to His Mild and Gracious Prescriptions! for the adoption of Them would insure the Cure of the diseases affecting the Soul, whether from original or actual sin, and would Heal the wounds and Allay the anguish of an agonized and chiding conscience: They would dispossess the heart of those evil propensities, which, instigated by the subtlety and malice of the Devil, influence it to its deepest misery, and the Soul's final destruction: They would dispel the melancholy and despair, which bear so heavily upon the mind, when the Peace of GOD is Withdrawn from it: They would calm and tranquilize the agitations of a Spirit trembling on the brink of a hopeless Eternity.

In effect JESUS still Continueth to Preach in this our Galilee, the Scene of the Visitation of His Blessed Gospel. And why are there not great Numbers of People following Him in faith and obedience; hanging on all the Utterances of His Lips, and receiving at His Hands The KINGDOM Prepared for them; and thinking, in the meekness and gratitude of their hearts, all things but loss for the gain of That KINGDOM, and for the Excellency of the knowledge of CHRIST JESUS, their LORD? For assuredly Human Souls are not of less Estimation in the Mind of our CREATOR in this our day; neither are the Terms of Salvation, That are Offered to us, of less Encouragement; and, therefore, the Everlasting Interests of our Immortal Souls should not be in any degree less pursued, than were those of the first Followers of The Same SAVIOUR and LORD, when Himself Present amongst The Inhabitants upon Earth, Visibly in our Nature.

St. Mark's description of the early advance of our SAVIOUR'S Ministry has been before stated and observed upon. In addition, it may be remarked, that in His Preaching, the Object of the MESSIAH was the Salvation of the Souls of His Hearers by the conversion of their hearts to GOD. The Scribes did not so labour: the pride and the haughtiness of their hearts and heads, (speaking generally,) would not let them so preach The Coming KINGDOM of GOD.

St. Luke's more detailed narrative of our SAVIOUR'S Opening Address has also been before stated. On which it may be here further remarked, that in His Earliest Ministry did our Blessed LORD Set forth the Peculiar Merits and Mercies, the Perfection of Love and Charity, Which were the Principles That Actuated His SPIRIT towards Mankind: but His Gospel could not Profit them who rejected It: and sad is the picture there given of weak and vain and proud and ungrateful hearts. Some indeed wondered at the Gracious Words That Proceeded out of our SAVIOUR'S Mouth, and were, doubtless, Comforted beyond expression at the Prospect of Salvation unto Life Eternal thus Opening upon them. These were the Meek and Lowly of heart, the Humble and Con-

trite Spirits. Such as had before been led captive by Satan, and were groaning under such bondage, and seeking, by prayer and supplication, for Deliverance from Above: Such as Sin had blinded for a time from the view of Heavenly hopes and Spiritual joys, and had left them in all the darkness of despair. But how few, alas, must have been the true Believers and faithful Supporters of JESUS, though All, who had heard Him, might have gained wisdom to walk in a perfect Way, when That PREACHER of Mercy and TEACHER of Righteousness was not only Rejected by the majority of weight and influence in the Community, but grossly and Personally insulted, and more than threatened with imminent danger and even cruel death; from which He indeed Escaped only by a seeming Miracle. In the Temple, when of the age but of Boyhood, He had been listened to with wonder and delight. The Same Gracious SPIRIT Actuated Him on His Further Progress; and Deeper and more Impressive Truths did He then Disclose. O that His Hearers had been wise, that with the heart they had understood the Things, Which Belonged to their Everlasting Peace! But because He Justly Laid Claim to DIVINITY, they, as too Many, alas, still do, would have none of His Doctrine, nor suffer Him, though Peacefully and Graciously, to Reign over them. Such is the woeful effect of Spiritual pride. May we lay our understandings as well as our hearts at the Feet of JESUS!

△ CHAP. v.—And Seeing the Multitudes, He (JESUS) Went up into a Mountain: and when He was Set, His Disciples came unto Him; and He Opened His Mouth and Taught them, Saying, “Blessed are the Poor in Spirit! for theirs is The KINGDOM of HEAVEN.”—1 to 3.

What Multitudes with us are every where and every day seen needing, if not asking for or seeking, the Communication of That Word, on Which Everlasting Life and Peace and Joy depend! And why are there wanting Those, who should ascend up into the Mountain of Holiness, the Seat of Purity and Piety, both by precept and example, to make manifest the Vital Character and Principles of Christianity; and, opening their mouth as The SPIRIT, Yielding to their pious supplication for Its Guiding Grace, would Give them Utterance, teach the Great Truths, that belong to the Eternal Interests of Mankind, unto All within their influence?

How Comforting a Doctrine This to the Meek and Lowly of heart, to them, who, in a consciousness of their entire unworthiness of an Inheritance in the KINGDOM of HEAVEN, do eagerly close with the Offer of It, by dedicating themselves in all fervency and faithfulness to the service of Him, through Whose Merits and Intercession the Inestimable Blessing is Presented to and Pressed upon them! But, alas! how averse to its reception is the self-blinding principle of Self-righteousness, fostered, as it is, by Pride and Presumption, which by condemning and condemning the Poor in Spirit and the Meek of the Earth, loses for its Votaries the KINGDOM of HEAVEN! And who, indeed, that hath a right understanding and is sober-minded can be otherwise than poor in Spirit, humble, lowly, and deeply impressed with the hopelessness of the condition of his Soul, if dependant alone on his own merits for Salvation, and if The Gracious INTERCESSOR for Mankind had not Interposed between Man's offences and the punishment justly due to them? The contemplation of Which Act of Mercy, when traced from Its Cause to Its Effects, is enough to bring down the loftiest mind and proudest heart in Self-condemnation and abasement; and ought to influence to a paramount devotion of the Soul to the fulfilment of the Will and Commandments of so Great A BENEFACTOR. And be it remembered that to be Poor in Spirit is to be rich in the Favour of GOD, Which

Insures the Blessing of inward peace here, and Everlasting Happiness in the Riches of the Mercies of JEHOVAH Hereafter.

In St. Luke's narrative the Benediction of our SAVIOUR is thus given : *Blessed be ye Poor, for your's is The KINGDOM of GOD!*—Luke vi, 20 : meaning those, who were zealously pressing upon Him in a consciousness of their own Spiritual poverty, to draw that Virtue, which went out from Him,—the enriching them with the Supply of Knowledge and Wisdom for their Spiritual necessities. And if we come unto Him with faith, not trusting in our own righteousness, but in His Manifold and Great Mercies, GOD will Give us all Things richly to enjoy. Yea, The LORD aforetime Said by His Prophet Isaiah, [lxvi, 2,] *"To this Man will I Look, even to him, that is poor and of a contrite Spirit, and trembleth at My Word."* Which heart-cheering Truth to the truly humble-minded is thus Fully Confirmed by The SON of GOD Himself, Who Himself Came for the Especial and Gracious Purpose of Binding up the Broken-hearted by Imparting This Blessing.

St. Mark thus mentions our SAVIOUR'S Going up into the Mountain, and the Multitude following Him, and His Teaching them ; but he does not detail the Sermon. He enters however into the narrative of the Calling and Appointment of the Apostles thus : *And JESUS Goeth up into a Mountain, and Culleth unto Him whom He would : and they came unto Him : and He Ordained Twelve, that they should be with Him ; and that He might Send them forth to Preach, and to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils. And Simon He Surnamed Peter ; and James the Son of Zebedee, and John the Brother of James ; and He Surnamed them Boanerges, which is, the Sons of Thunder ; and Andrew and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the Son of Alphæus, and Thaddæus, and Simon, the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot which also betrayed Him ; and they went into an house.*—Chap. iii, 13 to 19.

St. Luke, who has before been briefly referred to in connection with the Text, also mentions the Calling of the Apostles, previous to the Sermon being Delivered from the Mount, thus : *And it came to pass, in those days, that JESUS Went out into a Mountain to Pray, and Continued all night in Prayer to GOD : and when it was day He Called unto Him His Disciples ; and of them He Chose Twelve ; whom also He Named Apostles ; Simon, (whom He also Named Peter,) and Andrew his Brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew, Matthew and Thomas, James the Son of Alphæus, and Simon, called Zelotes, and Judas the Brother of James, and Judas Iscariot which also was the Traitor. And He Came down with them and Stood in the Plain, and the Company of His Disciples, and a great Multitude of People out of all Judæa and Jerusalem, and from the Sea Coast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear Him, and to be Healed of their diseases ; and they, that were vexed with unclean Spirits : and they were Healed. And the whole Multitude sought to touch Him ; for there Went Virtue out of Him, and Healed them All. And He Lifted up His Eyes on His Disciples, and Said, "Blessed be ye Poor ! for your's is The KINGDOM of GOD !" —Chap. vi, 12 to 20.*

The Earnestness with which our SAVIOUR devoted Himself to Prayer, before Entering on the Great Office of Promulgating the Sublime and Essential Exhortations and Encouragements of His Gospel, is well deserving of both attention and imitation : and though St. Luke confines the Expression of the Beatitude thus to the Disciples of our Saviour then around Him, doubtless It was received with gladness, and was intended so to be by All, who in like-mindedness listen to the Recorded Utterance ; and so it will be to the end of Time by All, who have, by true faith and fervent supplication, sought to cherish the Soul-sustaining Promise, and apply It to their own hopes and personal expectations. And, in analogy, doubtless, all diseases of the Soul are at this



day, and will ever be, as promptly Healed by coming or going to JESUS, in the Spirit of Christian humility and confidence, and touching, in penitence and faith, the Hem of His Garment of Salvation, as they were in the Season of His PERSONAL Ministry upon Earth, when Acting as The PHYSICIAN of Bodies as well as of Souls.

The wise Son of David had said, *Better is it to be of an humble Spirit with the Lowly, than to divide the spoil with the Proud.*—Prov. xvi, 19. And again, *A Man's pride shall bring him low; but Honour shall uphold the Humble in spirit.*—xxix, 23. And the Declaration of JEHOVAH, as Put forth from the mouth of the Prophet Isaiah, Offers the same Gracious Encouragement to the meek and quiet Spirit, *For Thus Saith The HIGH and LOFTY ONE, That Inhabiteh Eternity, Whose Name is HOLY, "I Dwell in the High and Holy Place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble Spirit, to Revive the Spirit of the Humble, and to Revive the heart of the contrite Ones."*—Chap. lvii, 15.

Blessed are They, that mourn! for they shall be Comforted.—4.

They, that mourn in spirit and in truth for their sins and wickednesses, and for their unnatural and ungrateful treatment of their CREATOR and DIVINE BENEFACITOR; and, sorrowing with a godly sorrow at the remembrance and Self-conviction thereof, turn from the evil of their ways, following after Righteousness in pure Faith, shall, through the Gracious Offices of The Blessed JESUS, be Comforted with Spiritual Comfort and all Holy Consolation; Which shall Convert their weeping into the solemn and inspiring laughter of the Soul, according to the spirit of St. Luke's description of This Beatitude: *Blessed are ye, that weep now! for ye shall laugh.*—Chap. vi, 21. For there shall be Opened unto them the Acceptable Year of The LORD, when All, that so mourn, shall have their sorrows hushed; and shall have Given unto them Beauty for ashes, the Oil of Joy for mourning, the Garment of Praise for the Spirit of heaviness.—Isa. lxi, 2, 3. Yea, The COMFORTER shall Come unto them with Healing on His Wings. The Same Upholding and Supportive Doctrine our SAVIOUR Inculcated upon an after Occasion, when, Pouring forth Consolation amidst the presence and the prospect of tribulation, He thus Addressed Those around Him, from whom He Foretold that He should, for a time, be Separated: *"Verily, Verily, I Say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament; and ye shall be sorrowful; but your sorrow shall be Turned into joy. Ye now, therefore, have sorrow, but I will See you again; and your heart shall rejoice; and your joy no Man taketh from you."*—John xvi, 20 to 22. St. Paul, in the strong confidence of the Final Fulfilment of That Prophecy in Its Spirit, both towards himself and all the Faithful in CHRIST JESUS, thus extends the Cheering Assurance in his 2nd Epistle to the Corinthian Converts: *Our hope of you (he writes) is stedfast, knowing, that as ye are Partakers of the Sufferings, so shall ye be also of the Consolations.*—Chap. i, 7. It is true that the Time has yet to come, when GOD shall Wipe away all tears; when there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain; for when that shall be The Tabernacle of GOD will be with Men, and He will Dwell with them; and they shall be His People, and GOD Himself shall be with them, and be their GOD.—Rev. xxi, 4. 3. And assuredly That Time will Come in The ALMIGHTY'S Season, and though It now seem long to tarry, let us in faith and patience wait for It!

Blessed are the Meek! for they shall inherit the Earth.—5.

That the Meek, as the Peculiar Favourites of GOD, and justly so, since that Spirit is alone consistent with true piety; and that to them, more especially, is

given, from their contented and submissive and unassuming nature, to enjoy in its truest sense this Life, and, therefore, virtually to *inherit the Earth*, by possessing the most enduring happiness whilst upon it, was the declaration of David, as well as of The SON of David, the Former adding, *and shall delight themselves in the abundance of Peace*; [Ps. xxxvii, 11.] thus shewing the perfect harmony in this respect under the Law and Gospel. The truly Meek have indeed no want unsatisfied, feeling that all, which they possess, is far beyond their merit; and governing themselves by the rules of temperance and sobriety, they not only make what they have, exceed what they exclusively appropriate to themselves, but find in such Self-discipline the most satisfactory result, affording them the means of withholding not from Others, that have more need, and thus constituting a source of gratifying action as well as reflection, and vesting in them the most profitable Inheritance, even present peace, and the unfailing prospect of Everlasting Joy. Even the valuable properties and faculties of Others are, as it were, an inheritance of the Meek, since they derive both advantage and pleasure from them,—advantage from the general diffusion of Others' merits, and pleasure from seeing that gratification imparted extensively from them: no spirit of envy or jealousy or unchristian emulation actuating their minds, they rejoice in the essential and, more especially, the Spiritual advantages of their Fellow-Creatures. Yea, *Blessed are the Meek!* for as The Blessed JESUS Averred, they thus virtually possess all the Blessings of the Earth, and assuredly they shall inherit the infinitely Richer Blessings of HEAVEN.

*Blessed are They, which do hunger and thirst after Righteousness! for they shall be filled.*—6. 

To hunger for Spiritual Food, and to thirst for that Water, which alone satisfieth the thirst of the Soul, is to hunger and thirst for that, which certainly will be Supplied, and that in abundance proportionate to the cravings of the Soul's appetite. And to Those, who, when Bidden to the Feast, have on the Garment of such Spiritual desires, will The Heavenly HOST Freely Give His Welcome, and with It His Blessing, with the Out-pouring of the Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT. The hunger and thirst of the natural Body we may, under peculiar circumstances, seek in vain to satiate, but the cravings of the Immortal Soul have only to be rightly directed, and the Bread of Eternal Life, and the Waters of Spiritual Comfort are at once Set before us; being sought in meekness and devout supplication, in the Name and through the Merits of JESUS CHRIST, Who Inviteth All, that so hunger and thirst, to come to Him in faith, that He may Refresh them: for He had before Said, through His SPIRIT, by His Prophet Isaiah, *Ho! Every One, that thirsteth, come ye to the Waters; and he, that hath no money, come ye, buy, and eat, yea, come, buy wine and milk without price! Wherefore do ye spend money, for that, which is not Bread; and your labour for that, which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto Me, and eat ye that, which is good; and let your Soul delight itself in fatness!*—Chap. lv, 1, 2. And by the same Prophet did He, in all the richness of Intellectual Imagery, thus Draw the broad and awful Distinction between Them, that suppliantly seek for Spiritual Nurture, and Them, who scornfully reject It: *Thus Saith The LORD, "As the new wine is found in the cluster; and One saith, Destroy it not! for a Blessing is in it; so will I Do for My Servants' sakes, that I may not Destroy them all. And I will Bring forth a Seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an Inheritor of My Mountains; and Mine Elect shall inherit it; and My Servants shall dwell there: and Sharon shall be a Fold of Flocks; and the Valley of Achor a Place for the Herds to lie down in; for My People, that have sought Me. But ye are they, that forsake The LORD, that forget My Holy Mountain; that prepare a table for that*

*Troop, and that furnish the drink-offering unto that number: therefore will I Number you to the sword; and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter; because, when I Called, ye did not answer; when I Spake, ye did not hear; but did evil before Mine Eyes, and did choose that, wherein I Delighted not. Therefore Thus Saith The LORD GOD, Behold, My Servants shall eat; but ye shall be hungry: behold, My Servants shall drink; but ye shall be thirsty: behold, My Servants shall rejoice; but ye shall be ashamed: behold, My Servants shall sing for joy of heart; but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall howl for vexation of Spirit, and ye shall leave your name for a curse unto My Chosen: for The LORD GOD shall Slay thee; and Call His Servants by another Name: that he, who blesseth himself in the Earth, shall bless himself in The GOD of Truth; and he, that sweareth in the Earth, shall swear by The GOD of Truth; because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hid from Mine Eyes: For, behold, I Create New Heavens and a New Earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in That, Which I Create! for, behold, I Create Jerusalem a Rejoicing and her People a Joy: and I will Rejoice in Jerusalem and Joy in My People; and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying.”—Chap. lxxv, 8 to 19. With the Psalmist of Israel we, therefore, in the fulness of Faith, may say, *How Excellent is Thy Loving-Kindness, O GOD! therefore the Children of Men put their trust under the Shadow of Thy Wings: They shall be abundantly satisfied with the Fatness of Thy House; and Thou shalt Make them drink of the River of Thy Pleasures; for with Thee is the Fountain of Life.*—Ps. xxxvi, 7 to 9.*


Blessed are the Merciful! for they shall obtain Mercy.—7.

Since *Mercy Rejoiceth against Judgment*, (according to St. James ii, 13,) so They, who benevolently commiserate the failings and infirmities of Others, and seek to remove or remedy them or their consequences, have pleasure of a very high degree experienced in the heart, and therefore permanent, in so doing; and they not only have the truest enjoyment of the Life that is, but are in an especial manner Blessed, if their works operate through Faith and the love of CHRIST, with the Promise of the Life to Come, by the Assurance of DIVINE Mercy in the Day of their Final Judgment. Let us not hesitate to lay claim to such a two-fold and inestimable Blessing; and not sit in uncharitable judgment upon the conduct or character of Others; and ere we speak or think of Others, let us remember the need we have of Mercy in the Judgment upon us by Him, Who Alone Knoweth the secrets of the heart; lest, if we lend ourselves to harshness and severity towards our Fellow-Mortals, we may not find Mercy in the fearful time of need, but meet with Judgment without It. In all our dealings with our Fellow-Creatures, or with the inferior Order of Creation Mercy should ever be paramount in our feelings, for though, in an especial degree, the latter are made tributary to our comfort and convenience, and are Appointed to be within our power, yet do they derive their nature and their nurture from The Same GOD as Ourselves, and are equally under His Watchful Eye. *Blessed is he, that considereth the Poor!* was the Psalmist's earlier avowal; and he points out the proofs of such Blessedness in the Especial Instances of DIVINE PROVIDENCE, saying, *The LORD will Deliver him in time of trouble: The LORD will Preserve him, and Keep him alive; and he shall be Blessed upon the Earth. GOD will not Deliver him unto the will of his Enemies; but will Strengthen him upon the bed of languishing; and will Make all his bed in his sickness.*—Ps. xli, 1 to 3.

Blessed are the Pure in heart! for they shall see GOD.—8.

They, who, in all their thoughts, words, and actions, are governed and

impelled by uprightness and integrity and singleness of mind, being at all times impressed with the sense of An All-Seeing and Omniscient GOD, and anxious only for His Honour and His Favour, will, by the purity of their motives and their ends, best testify their gratitude for His Love, and their desire in all things to please Him, and to fulfil His Will. Such are the Pure in heart, who have no sinister or equivocal or hypocritical object or intention; but shun the practice in themselves, and shudder, when witnessing it in others, of even harbouring a thought, much more uttering a sentiment or committing an act of impurity. They look to The FOUNTAIN of Grace, The SPIRIT of Holiness, for Purification, and do not look in vain; pleading in the Name of The SON of GOD, Who, though in our Nature, Knew no sin, neither was guile found in His Mouth; and thus they become, both in faith and practice, pure in heart. These have also the unspeakable Blessing of inward Consolation and holy Joy, at the thought of seeing Him, Who, though Invisible to Mortal eye, is Ever Present with them, and will eventually Reveal Himself unto All in the Fulness of His Power, in all the Glory of His MAJESTY; and to all of Such as have cherished purity of heart in the Spirit and faith of CHRIST, will He Impart all the Graciousness of His Ineffable Love. David asked, but in the confidence of being Empowered from On HIGH to give a full and solacing answer to the devout inquiry, *Who shall ascend into the Hill of The LORD, or who shall stand in His Holy Place?* And this was his ready and conclusive reply: *He that hath clean hands and a pure heart.*—Ps. xxiv, 3, 4. And in all the exulting fulness of the Christian's hope, St. John says, *Behold, What Manner of Love The FATHER hath Bestowed upon us, that we should be Called the Sons of GOD! therefore the World knoweth us not, because it knew Him not: Beloved, now are we the Sons of GOD; and it doth not yet appear, what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall Appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. And every Man, that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as He is Pure.*—1 John iii, 1 to 3.

Blessed are the Peace Makers! for they shall be Called "the Children of GOD."—9. 

They, who at peace within themselves, through the prevalence of purity and piety in their hearts, benevolently exert themselves to render Others so; to allay the hurtful and hateful passions and propensities of their Neighbours or Associates, and to bring All within the Blissful Regions of The PRINCE of Peace; to have the KINGDOM of GOD already in dominion over their Souls, so that they may be both Called and have their Election Sure, as Children of GOD, and Joint Heirs with CHRIST of the Mansions of Eternal Blessedness. May our Souls so seek Peace and ensue it, that they may live for ever in the Life to Come amidst the Glories and Graces of The GOD of all Consolation, and of all MAJESTY, Might, Power, and Dominion!

Blessed are They, which are persecuted for Righteousness' sake! for theirs is the KINGDOM of HEAVEN.—10.

To be counted worthy even of Death for CHRIST'S Sake, hath been rightly esteemed, by the most faithful and zealous of His Followers, a Lot of peculiar and distinguished privilege and blessedness: and so indeed it is; *for the light affliction, which is but for a season, worketh out a far more exceeding, even an Eternal Weight of Glory: yea, though the outward Man perish, yet should we not faint, since the inward Man is, thereby, renewed, even day by day!* according to St. Paul, 2 Cor. iv, 16, 17. And may we treasure in our remembrance, and bring forth to our hearts' consolation and our Souls' joy these Graciously Given Encouragements, that *if we be dead with CHRIST; we shall also live with Him;*

that *if we suffer for Him, we shall also reign with Him*; [2 Tim. ii, 11, 12.] since by suffering for Righteousness' sake, we shall abound with the richest Fruits of DIVINE Love, even the possession of The KINGDOM of HEAVEN. If we *sanctify The LORD GOD in our hearts, we need not be afraid of the terror of Those, who seek to persecute us; neither should we be troubled beyond measure*; since by taking heed unto our end, we have the assurance of Peace, through faith in the Recompense of the Reward Promised in CHRIST JESUS. [1 Pet. iii, 14, 15.] Though Persecutions for Righteousness' sake, to the Body's destruction, are not now experienced in our Land; yet Persecutions or Strivings, or Artifices to subdue in us the Spiritual Life, both from within and from without, we are continually exposed to and experiencing; and happy are we if we do not, through their influence, yield up ourselves, our Souls and Bodies, their willing victims; and forego, for their fancied present ease or treacherous joys, the Promised Reward of Righteousness. And, indeed, what would be the gain of the whole World, if, by obtaining it, we lost the Welfare of our Immortal Souls? since the fashion of this World passeth away; but the Inheritance of the Saints in Light through CHRIST, their Righteousness and their Salvation, is Eternal in the Heavens. Let us, therefore, be *ready always to give an answer to Every One that asketh a reason of the hope that is in us, with meekness and holy fear; striving to have a good conscience; that if Any speak evil of us, as of Evil-Doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse our conversation in CHRIST*: for truly as the Apostle adds, *It is better, if the Will of GOD be so, that we suffer for well-doing, than for evil-doing.*—1 Peter iii, 15 to 17.

△ Blessed are ye, when Men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My Sake! rejoice, and be exceeding glad! for great is your Reward in Heaven! For so persecuted they the Prophets, which were before you.—11, 12.

To be reviled and persecuted and to be evil spoken of, because of our lively faith in CHRIST, is to be placed in a situation eminently desirable; since of Them, who are not ashamed of Him or His Doctrine, will He not be Ashamed, when He Cometh in the Clouds and in The MAJESTY of HEAVEN, to Pass the Final Judgment upon every Soul of Human Kind. St. Luke hath this Beatitude thus: *Blessed are ye, when Men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for The SON of Man's Sake! Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy; for, behold, your Reward is great in Heaven: for in like manner did their Fathers unto the Prophets.*—Chap. vi, 22, 23.

The support of CHRIST'S Cause in that meekness of Spirit, yet in all that constancy of the Faith, which belong to Them, who are in heart and in Soul His Followers, is, more than anything, likely to draw down upon us the rancour and the scorn and the imputation of hypocrisy from Such as have entirely surrendered themselves to the idle and profligate pleasures and vanities of the World. But amidst every such discouragement we should persevere unto the end, always bearing in mind the mockery and insult, the tauntings and revilings, the rejection and reproaching, the cruelties and persecutions, even to the most ignominious death, which our Blessed SAVIOUR Endured for our sakes and for our Salvation. In addition to the passage recently quoted from St. Peter, equally supportive of the Encouragement to persevere in holiness, that Apostle, when both in the experience and anticipation of suffering and cruelty and torture, exhorts Others, who may be so circumstanced, thus earnestly and affectionately to adopt His MASTER'S Admonition, *Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial, which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you; but rejoice,*

*in as much as ye are Partakers of CHRIST'S Sufferings; that, when His Glory shall be Revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy: if ye be reproached for the Name of CHRIST, happy are ye; for The SPIRIT of Glory and of GOD Resteth upon you.*—1 Peter iv, 12 to 14.

When the thoughtful and awful hour of death arrives, who would not surrender, had he the power, every instant of unhallowed enjoyment he had experienced, could he live over again; and rather suffer reproach and contumely and scorn, and be buffeted and shunned and spurned and imprisoned and torn with stripes, and endure all manner of affliction and the most agonizing death itself, for the Sake of Him, through Whose Death and Resurrection we have the hope of Life Eternal: and that not only with patience and forbearance of resentment, but with the most lively joy and persevering devotedness and gratitude to GOD: knowing that the day of calamity would soon close; and, after a short and scarcely perceptible night of uninterrupted slumber in the grave, if not in the instant to the Spirit, the Day of Recompense Everlasting, and beyond all conception Bright and unutterably Exhilarating, would Open upon him; and then, as he suffered for CHRIST, and exulted in the suffering, so should he be Admitted into the Train of his SAVIOUR on His Triumphant Victory over all His Enemies, and share in All the Beatitudes That will eternally Emanate from Him! And why is that, which is in every One's power, and is his highest Privilege, and which the World cannot give, nor without his consent take away, deferred for a moment, or deferred till the moment, when that power ceaseth; till the night cometh, when no Man can work?

That the Disciples, when assured, by the Resurrection of CHRIST, of His DIVINITY, even sought persecution, rather than forego their faith in Him, is expressly Recorded in the *Acts*, when, after being beaten for preaching in the Name of JESUS, and commanded by the High Priest and Council not to do so, *they rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His Name; and daily in the Temple, and in every house that they entered, they ceased not to teach and preach JESUS CHRIST.*—Chap. v, 41, 42.

In the remonstrance of the Prophet Nehemiah at the iniquities of the Israelites, he accuses them not only of casting the Law of The LORD behind their backs, but of slaying His Prophets, which testified against them, to turn them to The LORD.—Chap. ix, 26. Indeed, awfully great was the slaughter of these Chosen and faithful Servants of JEHOVAH in the days of Ahab, when Jezebel his Queen cut them off, wherever they could be found. [1 Kings xviii, 4.] A melancholy and heart-appalling representation of the desolating and rancorous spirit of his infatuated Countrymen against the successive Messengers and Ministers from The ALMIGHTY, of the Offer of Everlasting Peace, on their forsaking the exposed evil of their ways, and turning unto The LORD in contrition and amendment of Life and conversation, is given in the charge and challenge of the undaunted and martyred Stephen, at the peril and experience of agonizing sufferings even unto death; winding up the climax of his heavy accusation by the assertion that they had even killed The LORD of Life: *Ye stiff-necked and Uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist The HOLY GHOST: as your Fathers did, so do ye! Which of the Prophets have not your Fathers persecuted? And they have slain them, which shewed before of the Coming of The JUST ONE; of Whom ye have been now the Betrayers and Murderers.*—Acts vii, 51, 52. Nor was that Spirit of deep and malevolent and desolating persecution confined to the Jews, for it spread with the Religion of CHRIST, and assailed its Converts and Propagators in Foreign Lands; as St. Paul relates to have been the experience of the Thessalonians, who became Followers of the Churches of GOD, which in Judea were in CHRIST JESUS, and suffered like things of their own Countrymen, even as they had

*of the Jews, who (as he added) both killed The LORD JESUS and their own Prophets, and persecuted His Apostles.—1 Thess. ii, 14, 15. And None were persecuted more than St. Paul himself, equally by Jews and Gentiles; yet did he glory in tribulation; knowing, as he wrote to his Friends at Rome, that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope; and that in the hope of the Glory of GOD he unceasingly rejoiced.—Chap. v, 3, 4. 2.*

△ Ye are the Salt of the Earth; but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of Men.—13.

This is an Admonition to Those, who profess the faith of CHRIST, to shew forth the excellency of that faith by an earnest and persevering imitation of the Labours of Love, which He Gratuitously Underwent; to aid with all our power the nurture of that principle of Christian Life in Others; and not to be as salt, which by neglect has lost its savour, neither fit for the land nor yet for the dunghill; lest, like unprofitable Servants, we be cast out into utter neglect and contempt and rejection. The Man who avows himself to be a Christian, yet doeth not the works, which CHRIST Commanded, is indeed worse than salt without savour, for he, as a free and responsible Agent, hath suffered his best spirit to evaporate, and be dissipated, and to become not only passively useless, but to be culpably and criminally so; affecting a Character, the essential qualities of which he practically belies.

The Custom of our SAVIOUR seems to have been, to Make any object of Nature, at the time presented to the view of His Auditors, tributary to the enforcement of His Reasoning. On another occasion, both St. Mark and St. Luke relate, that the same Simile was Made use of by Him in an after Discourse, in which He Gave it a more forcible Illustration, Saying, *Every One shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt: salt is good; but if the salt have lost its saltiness, wherewith will ye season it? It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill. Have salt in yourselves, and have peace One with Another!*—Mark ix, 49, 50; and Luke xiv, 34, 35.

Ye are the Light of the World. A City, that is set on an Hill, cannot be hid; neither do Men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto All that are in the house. Let your light so shine before Men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your FATHER, Which is in Heaven!—14 to 16.

When The SUN of Righteousness Shone forth, His Rays were Spread so as to Diffuse Light and Warmth and Spiritual Animation and Health; and from those Hearts, which receive Them with gladness and gratitude, are reflected the Glorious Light, Which Enlighteneth the World. From Generation to Generation Thus is continued the Influence of That DIVINE LIGHT, Which more and more Shineth unto the Perfect Day. To Such as open their hearts joyfully to receive It, doth It ever Shine in Its Strength and Brightness, and in the Guidance of their steps through Life Its Influence is manifest, and observable as a City on a Hill in the clearest atmosphere! To the faithful Soul what exultation should it be to feel itself Called upon and Encouraged to reflect the Saving and Sanctifying Light of its Blessed SAVIOUR! What a Gracious Office is this to be Appointed unto! how full of all the excitement and delight of Holy rapture to the Object, and how cheering in the meditation of its essential usefulness to Others! And though one Star differs from another Star in glory, why (since to every one of us is the opportunity open,) do we not seek, by using the Offered Rays of That SUN of Righteousness, to Shine as the Stars in the Firmament of

Heaven, according to our portion of Allotted Grace, that we may hereafter shine in Glory with Him in His Heavenly KINGDOM?

The latter division of the Text contains an Exhortation, in support of the Doctrine inculcated by Personification; and the inducement to the observance of it is the animating influence it is calculated to have on Others of our Fellow-Creatures, who viewing the beauty and purity of the Heavenly Flame burning within us, may seek to be Guided by The Same Light, and be cheered from The Same Source of Spiritual Warmth: that Others, seeing our good works, not exhibited from ostentatious motives, nor done through hypocrisy or Spiritual pride, but the consistent and necessary effect of a pure and lively faith, of a holy fear and reverential love of GOD, may go and do likewise, and thereby contribute to render us the Favoured Instruments of good in our Generation, and eventually, for CHRIST'S Sake, fit us to be Enrolled amongst the Elect Children of GOD. By thus glorifying our HEAVENLY FATHER on Earth, we have the Blessed Assurance of being in the Way to Life Eternal, where we shall witness the Fulness of the Glories of Creation and Redemption in the Temple of The Living GOD, of Which CHRIST Himself is The Light. To this end may we do justly, and love mercy, and walk humbly with our GOD; for *the path of the Just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day,* according to Solomon. [Prov. iv, 18.]

St. Paul uses the same exalting comparison, when, addressing his Philippian Correspondents, he exhorts them to *be blameless and harmless, as the Sons of GOD, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse Nation, among whom they should shine as Lights in the World, holding forth the Word of Life.*—Chap. ii, 15, 16.

St. Mark gives a new turn to the same Simile, whether used on the same or a different occasion, where he represents our SAVIOUR, thus Addressing Those around Him: *Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel or under a bed; and not to be set on a candlestick? For there is nothing hid, which shall not be manifested; neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come abroad.*—Chap. iv, 21, 22.

St. Luke wrote also to the same effect, and nearly in the same words, concluding with The SAVIOUR'S Admonition, *Take heed, therefore, how ye hear! for Whosoever hath, to him shall be Given; and Whosoever hath not, from him shall be Taken, even that which he seemeth to have.*—Chap. viii, 16 to 18. One branch of the same great and important Truth being thus Inculcated, That of the Omniscience of THE DEITY, and the sad but prevailing folly of Man, in an unregenerated state, to have far less fear of The ALMIGHTY'S Judgment upon actions and motives, than that of Fellow-Mortals. On another occasion our SAVIOUR, Using the same Simile, according to St. Luke, thus Enlarged upon it: *No Man, when he hath lighted a candle, putteth it in a secret place, neither under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that they, which come in, may see the light: the light of the body is the eye, therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness: take heed therefore that the light, which is in thee, be not darkness! If thy whole body, therefore, be full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light.*—Chap. xi, 33 to 36. The single eye to The SAVIOUR'S Glory directs, through the Light of the Gospel, both Body and Soul in the sure Way of Salvation, into Which darkness entereth not; for The SPIRIT of JEHOVAH is the Lamp thereof.

THE SON of GOD, Addressing Himself to His Followers, Said, *Herein is My FATHER Glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My Disciples.*—John xv, 8. So St. Peter, in his Apostolic admonitions, holds out the encourage-



ment to abstain from evil and to do good, pointing out to Such as are true Believers and faithful Followers of The LORD JESUS, the Israelites indeed, as *a Chosen Generation, to shew forth the Praises of Him, Who hath Called them out of darkness into His Marvellous Light, and urging them to have their conversation honest among the Gentiles*; adding that, *whereas they speak against you as Evil Doers, they may, by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify GOD in the Day of Visitation.*—1 Peter ii, 7. 9. 12. It is among the Deep Things of GOD, and Hidden amidst His Ineffable NATURE, that though Himself in That Light, Which no Eye can approach unto, and unto Whom no evil can come, He yet Condescends to Receive praises from Man, even in his fallen state, and to Take Pleasure therein; if poured forth from a humble, a grateful, a faithful, and obedient heart, for His Blessed SON JESUS CHRIST'S Sake.

△ Think not that I am Come to Destroy the Law or the Prophets! I am not Come to Destroy, but to Fulfil: for, Verily I Say unto you, Till Heaven and Earth pass, one jot, or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law till All be Fulfilled. Whosoever, therefore, shall break one of these least Commandments, and shall teach Men so, he shall be Called the least in The KINGDOM of HEAVEN; but Whosoever shall do and teach Them, the Same shall be Called Great in the KINGDOM of HEAVEN: for I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the KINGDOM of HEAVEN.—17 to 20.

CHRIST, of Whose Gospel or New Covenant of Grace the Law or Old Covenant of Sacrifices was the Type, Came to Give a *Spirit* to that *Body*, and not to destroy it,—to Convert the outward ceremonies of the head and hand to the inward operations of the heart,—to Superadd to the prostration of the knee and the utterances of the lips, the musings and hallowed offerings and sympathetic actions of the Soul,—to Engraft on the dignity of the ceremonial observance of holy Institutions, the more exalted though perfectly consistent qualities of purity and piety and justice and charity in the Inner Man, through the Refining and Guiding and Animating Power of The HOLY SPIRIT: HE Came to Fulfil all That Righteousness in His Person, and to Teach Men so; and Exhort to the imitation of It; Regarding the Rites of the Mosaic Dispensation as intended to have been the emblems of It; and Seeking, at the same time, to Diffuse a Sense of the Omniscience of The GOD-HEAD, and of His Own DIVINITY, by Prophetically Declaring, on What Condition alone The KINGDOM of HEAVEN was to be gained; by a heart-felt faith and a life in conformity thereto, *CHRIST being* (as St. Paul testified of Him,) *the End of the Law for Righteousness to every One, that believeth.*—Romans x, 4.

As the Law was the Word of GOD, Who is The Fountain of Truth, so nothing of That Word shall fail; yea, rather than any part of It should not be Fulfilled, the whole Universe, the material Heaven as well as the solid Earth, Both Creatures of THE ALMIGHTY'S Power, shall pass away: for The LORD is not a Man, that He should Repent; that He should Say, and not Do it. The Law, as appointing the shedding of innocent blood for the atonement of sin, fore-shewed the Precious Blood-Shedding of The LAMB of GOD, The HOLY ONE of Israel, in Expiation of the offendings of a Naughtly World, at least so far as it is Warrantable in The DIVINE Councils to Reconcile Mercy with Justice. In this manner is every jot and tittle of the Law Fulfilled in CHRIST.

St. Paul, in the mighty workings of his highly Gifted and Inspired mind, wrote that *by the deeds of the Law there shall no Flesh be justified in GOD'S Sight; for by the Law is the knowledge of sin; and that All have sinned and come short of the Glory of GOD*: but then he holds forth this Consolation to every penitent Sinner, and faithful Believer in JESUS: *Now the Righteousness of GOD, with-*

out the Law, is Manifested, being Witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the Righteousness of GOD, Which is by faith of JESUS CHRIST unto All, and upon All Them, that believe; being Justified freely by DIVINE Grace, through the Redemption that is in CHRIST JESUS; Whom GOD hath Set forth to be the Propitiation, through faith in His Blood, to declare His Righteousness for the Remission of sins that are past, through the Forbearance of GOD: to declare (he adds,) at this time His Righteousness, that He might be Just, and The JUSTIFIER of him, which believeth in JESUS.—Romans iii, 20, 23, 21, 22, 24 to 26. And the same Apostle remonstrated against that ignorance of GOD'S Righteousness, which goeth about to establish its own righteousness; and doth not submit itself unto the Righteousness of GOD.—Chap. x, 4, 3. And in his Epistle to the Galatians he insists that the Law was our School Master to bring us unto CHRIST, that we might be Justified by Faith.—Chap. iii, 24. And the Apostle emphatically asks, Do we make void the Law through Faith? thus impassionately and devoutly answering, GOD Forbid! yea, we establish the Law.—Romans iii, 31. And in another place he writes, Israel, which followed after the Law of Righteousness, hath not attained to the Law of Righteousness: and he inquires, Wherefore? to which he himself answers, Because they sought it not by Faith, but as it were by the works of the Law: for being ignorant of GOD'S Righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, they had not submitted themselves unto the Righteousness of GOD.—Romans ix, 31, 32., and x, 3.

St. Luke relates Sentiments of the same tendency as Uttered by our SAVIOUR, Who thus Met the derision of the Pharisees, Saying, Ye are they, which justify yourselves before Men; but GOD Knoweth your hearts; for that, which is highly esteemed among Men, is Abomination in the Sight of GOD: the Law and the Prophets were until John; since that time The KINGDOM of GOD is Preached, and every Man presseth into It: concluding with the passage before quoted, It is easier for Heaven and Earth to pass, than one tittle of the Law to fail.—Chap. xvi, 14 to 17.

To observe part only of an express Ordinance, and even from inattention to omit a performance of the remainder, is unwarrantable in Human institutions; and cannot be excused in DIVINE Ones: it bespeaks a negligence censurable in Worldly matters; but is cruel towards Oneself, and criminal towards our HEAVENLY FATHER in Spiritual and Eternal Concerns. He, therefore, who does so, and teaches Men so, may indeed be deemed undeservedly Blest, if The ALMIGHTY do not in turn Neglect and Reject him; but, on the contrary, Influenced by Infinite Mercy, through the Interceding Righteousness of CHRIST, Receive his Immortal Soul into Heaven, though Allotting to him the station of the Least in that Spiritual KINGDOM. But he, who daringly and presumptuously transgresses One of GOD'S Express Commandments, and influences Others to do likewise, vainly thinking to screen himself by an observance of one course of duty in an indulgence of a departure from another, we are told by St. James, though he keep the whole Law, (in other respects,) yet by thus offending in one point is guilty of all: [Chap. ii. 10.] it is obeying where obedience does not clash with our prejudices or partialities; but in matters, where alone our affections and lusts oppose themselves, it is slighting the Authority of Him, Who is Intitled to our whole hearts, Who not only Created and hath Sustained us, but Offered to Redeem and Sanctify us to Everlasting Life and Joy unutterable. Still, though a perfect and sinless Obedience is Peculiar to CHRIST, to aim progressively and perseveringly at its attainment, with a humble and pious mind and heart, is within the reach of All; and this will be accepted according to that we have: and possessing such a Spirit and pursuing such a practice, relying on CHRIST as our Perfect Righteousness, we may hope and confidently trust to be

Called to His KINGDOM in HEAVEN, and may be Counted amongst the Great and Exalted There, Where, to be the Least, is to be in the unabating fruition of Such Preternatural Joy, as the eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of Man to conceive.

The Blessed JESUS, having thus Laid down His Doctrine in general terms, Proceeds to exemplify It by an apposite description of the hollow religious profession and practice of the Scribes and Pharisees, who were sufficiently observant of the outward ceremonies of the faith they professed, and, for the sake of the deference and praise of their Fellow-Creatures, put on the appearance of sanctity and devotion, whilst, at the same time, the hearts of too many of them were dead to all the profitable works of Faith, and callous to all the Influences of DIVINE Grace Striving within them. They must have wilfully blinded their own Spiritual eyes, and stifled the warnings and condemning voice of Conscience, or Reflection would have convinced them, since they had not worshipped JEHOVAH in Spirit and in truth, but had made this World the God of their idolatry, that The OMNISCIENT could not be Pleased with their lip-service, and would not, therefore, in the Righteousness of His Judgments, Honour them, when He Cometh in His KINGDOM. Insincerity between Man and Man is an injustice to Oneself, since it sinks and degrades us even in our own estimation, and obliterates the beauty and dignity of our Nature; lowering us by our own admission in the scale of Human merit, and thereby generating in us the hellish vices of envy, hatred, and malice towards those, who shame us by being true of heart, and who would especially blush to be insincere towards GOD. To proclaim aloud His Praise, and outwardly to do Him homage and pay Him worship, when inwardly we deny Him, because our hearts are far from Him, is, in the spirit of the most consummate folly and weakness, to give up the substance for the shadow,—the Bread, which Nourisheth unto Eternal Life, for the stone, which destroyeth with a fell destruction: since what is the utmost grasp and bound of temporal influence in power, wealth, and proud and selfish and sensual gratification? how short, how precarious, by how Few attained, and how disappointing even in the enjoyment!—Vanity of vanities, all is vanity!—By Many, when obtained, soon lost in the fickleness of this World's favours, and by None carried beyond the grave: Beyond which they will arise as just instruments of accusation to exclude the Soul of the Accused, then risen to an inglorious immortality, from the KINGDOM of HEAVEN, alas, for ever!

△ Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill! and Whosoever shall kill, shall be in danger of the Judgment. But I Say unto you, That Whosoever is angry with his Brother, without a cause, shall be in danger of the Judgment; and Whosoever shall say to his Brother, "Raca!" shall be in danger of the Council; But Whosoever shall say, "Thou Fool!" shall be in danger of Hell-fire. Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the Altar, and there rememberest that thy Brother hath ought against thee, leave there thy gift before the Altar, and go thy way! first be reconciled to thy Brother, and then come and offer thy gift!—21 to 24.

Here the axe is laid to the root of the evil; it is applied to the heart, where the thought of evil takes root, and where it should and can most easily be stifled in its birth. We are Warned, by the dread of everlasting punishment, against cherishing even anger (which in its extremity is often the cause of murder,) against Others without cause; and are elsewhere Commanded, if our anger should, under strong provocation, arise, in the demonstration of it, to sin not, neither to let the Sun go down upon it. In proportion to the extent of our anger, if groundlessly given way to, in acts of inward malice and outward resentment, though falling far short of murderous intent, will be the awfulness of the Judgment and the severity of the sentence Passed on us in the High Councils

of HEAVEN, if we do not repent in time, and strive to restrain our passion, and put on the Spirit of meekness and gentleness and peace. Amidst the different degrees of offending, the last degree of Punishment, whether intended to be conveyed to our conceptions literally or figuratively, (literally as being indeed a fire, which will never be quenched, and as preying upon our feeling as burnings do here upon our present corporeal sense, only in an infinitely more extreme degree; or whether, figuratively, it be meant to picture that Spiritual fire, which our own Self-accusing and Self-condemning consciences will raise up, and which will never be extinguished,) is matter of present uncertainty, and not unreasonable doubt: but either alternative must be very terrible, and is appallingly distressing in the contemplation; and if any thing like the raging and unallayable fever of remorse arises to our conception, it is the greater, and may be the more probable evil of the two. The Admonition to seek reconciliation with our Fellow-Mortal, ere we hope to find our Common MAKER Willing to Extend His towards us, is universally applicable; all Mankind being Brethren, as Creatures of The Same GOD and Heirs of the Same hope of Salvation, and should not be confined to the limited range of Members of the same Kindred or Family: though as we are particularly enjoined to do good to Those of the Household of Faith, so should we, in an especial manner, abstain from harbouring towards any of them uncharitable feelings; for so to offend against one's own Brethren, where the bond of union, both Spiritually and Naturally, should be most strong, is still more to endanger our hope of Pardon and Reconciliation from An All-Pure and Omniscient GOD: it is vitally warring against the Precept and Principle of The Great ADVOCATE of Brotherly Love, Who Came amongst us to Diffuse Peace and Good-Will upon Earth.

Self-examination should be a daily exercise with every one of us, but more extensively and especially should it precede an approach to the House, and still more to the Altar of GOD: if, as the result of that investigation, we discover that we have injured our Neighbours, and have it in our power to make reparation, or, at least, acknowledgment, under an exprest feeling of sorrow, let us do so ere we venture to obtrude ourselves into the conscious and peculiar Presence of GOD, Who is alike Omniscient and Omnipotent; for though with an offering in our hand, and an avowal of penitence and lively sorrow for transgressing His Commandments generally, yet if we withhold the best proofs of repentance in our dealings with the Neighbours we have injured, we withhold from Him the sacrifice most Acceptable to Him, and prove ourselves wanting in that consistency, which is essential to make up the character of a true Christian.

*Thou shalt not kill*, was a Law Written by the Finger of GOD on the heart of Man from his first Creation. Cain's remorse, at his so early infraction of It, spoke, in more than language, his just sense of It. The Promulgation of It in a Code of Laws Delivered by The ALMIGHTY to Moses, as set forth in the 20th Chapter of Exodus, and repeated in the 5th of Deuteronomy, was only to Impress on the Israelites a deeper observance of It, and to present a concise and striking Record of The DIVINE Will, for their observance on entering a Land of Idolatry. The Favourite Disciple of our Blessed SAVIOUR, Who Himself was Love, and Gentleness and Forbearance and Forgiveness Personified, followed up this Lesson he had received from his LORD and MASTER, treasuring it up in his heart, and thus diffusing it in his writings, himself holding the Pen of Inspiration: *Whosoever hateth his Brother is a Murderer; and ye know, that no Murderer hath Eternal Life abiding in him!* Nay, he establishes that it is not sufficient not to hate, but that on the contrary we must bring our hearts to cherish Brotherly love unlimitedly; for he adds, *We know that we have passed from death unto Life, because we love the Brethren: he that loveth not his Brother abideth in death.*—1 John iii, 15. 14.

- △ Agree with thine Adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him! lest at any time the Adversary deliver thee to the Judge, and the Judge deliver thee to the Officer, and thou be cast into Prison: Verily I Say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.—25, 26.

If this be policy, as applied to Human concerns, which undoubtedly it is, yet is it figuratively incalculably more so, as respects Spiritual and Eternal interests. To have our GOD our Adversary, by having despoiled Him of His Right of Homage, and withheld from Him His Dues of Service, by opposing ourselves to His Laws and by breaking His Commandments; and not to strive to be Reconciled to Him at the first instant of conscious and Self-accusing reflection, when we should justly fear that a short interval, and possibly the very next moment, may leave us without the power of proving a penitent sorrow, is an awful and Self-imposed blindness to our Eternal Welfare, and a daring neglect of the Gracious Forbearance of our CREATOR, and a rejection of the Merciful Offices of our DIVINE MEDIATOR; and yet how apt we are to be so slothful and remiss in any effort to acknowledge the Forbearance and seek the Forgiveness of GOD, that we not only endanger the Soul's Dismissal from the Glories of His Presence, but deeply hazard its entire surrender to the captivity of Satan, and its Destiny to Everlasting Burnings. May we, with an earnest desire after The ALMIGHTY'S Reconciliation, pray unto Him, whilst He may be Found, and sue unto Him, while He is Near; ever bearing in mind, what a fearful thing it would be to fall into the Hands of The Living GOD, when He could not but justly be Incensed with our ingratitude and perverseness, and when the Door of DIVINE Mercy, in Observance of His Word, Which never Faileth, would Close for ever against us.

The term Adversary may be understood to include the character of Creditor or Accuser as its object, and by the context should seem to be so used on this occasion. And to whom can we owe so much, or be so everlastingly indebted as to our HEAVENLY FATHER, Who hath not only Created us, but freely Given us all things that we enjoy, and has so Immeasurably Added to Such Bounty, by the Gift of His Only SON to Obtain for us His Pardon and Reconciliation. However, therefore, we may hitherto have offended against so Gracious A LORD and MASTER, and so Merciful A MEDIATOR, let us no longer neglect or break through His Laws, All of Which are Holy, Just, and Pure, and Abounding, as experienced in the observance, with Spiritual Peace and Consolation.

St. Luke's narrative is thus given: *When thou goest with thine Adversary to the Magistrate, as thou art in the way, give diligence, that thou mayest be delivered from him! lest he hale thee to the Judge, and the Judge deliver thee to the Officer, and the Officer cast thee into Prison: I Tell thee, thou shalt not depart thence, till thou hast paid the very last mite.*—Chap. xii, 58, 59. An Admonition of a like tendency had proceeded from Solomon: *Go not forth hastily to strive, lest thou know not what to do in the end thereof, when thy Neighbour hath put thee to shame! debate thy cause with thy Neighbour himself!* [Prov. xxv, 8, 9.] and the exhortation of the Evangelical Prophet forms an appropriate conclusion to these reflections, *Seek ye The LORD, while He may be Found! call ye upon Him while He is Near! Let the Wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous Man his thoughts; and let him return unto The LORD! and He will have Mercy upon him; and to our GOD, for He will Abundantly Pardon.*—Isa. lv, 5, 6.

- △ Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery! but I Say unto you, That Whosoever looketh on a Woman, to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.—27, 28.

As The LORD Accepteth the Will of a penitent Sinner to amend his ways,

when opportunity of evincing that will to Man is withheld; so are the corruptions and evil propensities of the heart and spirit of Man, which are alone known to ourselves, and to GOD, (Who Knoweth all things, even the deep things of the heart,) obnoxious and offensive to His Pure Eyes, though those imaginings of evil do not break out into action, but are checked by outward and controulling circumstances from gratification. To lust after a Woman in the spirit of concubinage or adultery, is to defile our Soul,—to lust with her is to defile two: to this extent in the Eye of The ALMIGHTY is the difference. The Man who would, if he could, gratify his passion unwarrantably, is as impure in the Sight of GOD, and as unfit for the KINGDOM of HEAVEN, and to stand before the Throne of Righteousness, and to breathe amidst the Spirits of Perfect Holiness, as he who hath satisfied his accursed appetite. Yet, although amongst too Many, such and similar evil thoughts will almost involuntarily obtrude themselves and rise up in the imaginations, more particularly at that trying period of Life, when the passions are most strong, and the reason not predominant or matured; yet if they be not dwelt upon or indulged in, but as instantly dismissed with condemnation, and prayer for a continued mastery over them, as destructive of inward peace, and hateful in the Sight of HEAVEN, from Whom they cannot be concealed, then, through the Ever Ready Help of GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT will a victory have been gained over sin and the subtle devices of Satan; in comparison of which any worldly conquest or acquisition is poor indeed. The grievous error on the first openings of lascivious inclinations is in not at once checking them, and diverting the mind to the consciousness of their iniquity and their danger; for as Solomon, who spoke from sad experience, forcibly asks, *Can a Man take fire in his bosom, and not be burned?*—Prov. vi, 27. Can he feed a flame within him of so hellish a nature as lust, and not become its Victim? Let us not give our thoughts to evil, for our thoughts are *heard* in HEAVEN. Had David turned away his eye, when the exposed and attractive person of Bathsheba, first presented itself to his view, what a succession of guilt would he have restrained himself from committing. Job, in the consciousness of the danger in yielding to the first impressions of sin, said, *I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid? Doth not The ALMIGHTY See my ways, and Count all my steps?*—Chap. xxxi, 1 and 4. Solomon thus forcibly and beautifully admonishes the Young, whose passions grow with their growth, and need the continual and guarded check of Prudence and Discretion, and the supplicated Controul of The HOLY SPIRIT: *My Son, keep thy Father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy Mother; bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck! When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee; for the commandment is a lamp, and the law is light, and reproofs of instruction are the way of Life, to keep thee from the evil Woman, from the flattery of the tongue of a strange Woman: lust not after her beauty in thine heart, neither let her take thee with her eyelids! for by means of a whorish Woman a Man is brought to a piece of bread; and the Adulteress will hunt for the precious Life.*—Prov. vi, 20 to 26.

And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee! for it is profitable for thee, that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole Body should be cast into Hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee! for it is profitable for thee, that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole Body should be cast into Hell.—29, 30. △

These are strong figurative expressions, intimating that if Self-government and Self-denial cannot be attained, otherwise than by the sacrifice of parts of our

natural system, the expedient, however cruel and unnatural it may seem to other than Spiritual eyes, of cutting asunder the parts offending, should be resorted to, because the restraint over violent passion cannot be otherwise attained: that rather than exercise our power of speech in blaspheming our GOD, it would be well for us to root out our tongues, the instruments of such impioussness, if, at the same time, we could have confidence in ourselves, that our hearts would not take GOD'S Holy Name in vain: that rather than look with an eye of scorn on the Meek and Suffering JESUS, or of pride and oppression, of malice and ill-will on His humble and faithful Followers, we should do well to pluck out the eye, as the instrument of our injustice and ingratitude, if we felt that our consciences might, in some degree, be so appeased, and that we could with confidence of success, therefore, pray that such sin might not be laid to our charge: or, that rather than shed a Brother's blood we should suffer to be amputated the limb that would strike the blow. Where the heart has been suffered to dwell on the contemplation of any hellish project, this act of Self-violence is, perhaps, the only or the surest remedy: to obviate, therefore, the necessity of having recourse to such an afflictive and disabling antidote to this more than mortal poison, let us anxiously study and strive to apply, as an effectual and yet grateful specific, in an earlier stage of the malady, by plucking out the mental eye and cutting off the hand of the heart, that would offend by endeavouring to draw us from the paths of purity, of piety, and peace.

St. Mark, in his account of this part of our SAVIOUR'S Address, enters more particularly into the descriptive horrors of that Hell, which it so behoves us, at every sacrifice, to escape: *If thy hand offend thee, cut it off! it is better for thee to enter into Life maimed, than having two hands to go into Hell, into the Fire that never shall be quenched; where their worm dieth not, and the Fire is not quenched. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off! it is better for thee to enter halt into Life, than having two feet to be cast into Hell, into the Fire that never shall be quenched; where their worm dieth not, and the Fire is not quenched. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out! it is better for thee to enter into The KINGDOM of GOD with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into Hell-fire; where their worm dieth not, and the Fire is not quenched.*—Chap. ix, 43 to 48. If Fornicators, who exist amongst married Men, as well as unmarried Persons, by inordinate concupiscence, and if Adulterers cannot otherwise check their evil propensities, which will inevitably exclude them from the KINGDOM of HEAVEN, it might be well for them to be amongst those, *who have made themselves Eunuchs for the KINGDOM of HEAVEN'S sake.*—Matt. xix, 12. St. Paul's doctrine upon this point is likewise deeply impressive: *If we live after the flesh, we shall die; but if we, through The SPIRIT, do mortify the deeds of the Body, we shall live:* [Rom. viii, 13.] and he means die the second death, from which there will, it is feared, be no resurrection ever to Glory. Let us, therefore, with St. Paul, pray for the Aid of The HOLY SPIRIT within us, and strive to keep under our bodies, and check their inordinate passions, and bring them into subjection to the law of purity and holiness. [1 Cor. ix, 27.] Let us learn habitually to set our affections on Things Above, not on things on the Earth; and to mortify our members, lest the Wrath of GOD Come on us, as Children of Disobedience.—Col. iii, 2, 5, 6.

△ It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his Wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: But I Say unto you, That Whosoever shall put away his Wife, saying for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and Whosoever shall marry her that is divorced, committeth adultery.—31, 32.

The union of matrimony, sought as it is in the Face of GOD, and as it always ought to be on godly principles, should be sacredly observed in the

inward, as well as outward Creature, and should be cherished as an emblem of that more Sacred Union of the Soul with CHRIST; Which it should be mutually and most perseveringly the study of both Man and Wife to join in. The wedded character, if actuated by Christian principles, will display itself in gentleness, in kindness, in love unfeigned, in mutual forbearance, in an inseparable devotedness to the Service of GOD, and in an earnest and unwearied desire to offer up all the fruits of that holy compact, trained and matured in righteousness, holy and Acceptable unto The LORD. To put away a Wife for adultery seems warranted by The DIVINE as well as Human Law; for that offence has nothing to palliate it, and shews an utter contempt of the Law of GOD and Man, a total abandonment of all SPIRITUAL Influence over the heart and affections; and, on the contrary, a proneness to sensuality and a desire to do evil; it breaks up all the ties of Parental as well as Conjugal attachment, and tends to unsettle the best elements and harmony of Society. But for offences short of this, we should not be harsh or severe in our judgment, but as we have each of us need of Merciful Consideration from On HIGH, so should we in our judgment upon Others think upon Mercy; lest we sin grievously, when our anger is kindled, and lest we heap on our own, already too heavy, load of iniquity that sin in Another, which our severity and unfeelingness may have contributed to produce. May the judicious advice of St. Paul, to Parties in conjugal connection, be faithfully followed: *Let the Husband render unto the Wife due benevolence! Let not the Wife depart from her Husband! and let not the Husband put away his Wife.*—1 Cor. vii, 3, 10, 11.

St. Mark thus relates the circumstances connected with This our SAVIOUR'S Doctrine: *And the Pharisees came to JESUS, and asked Him, "Is it lawful for a Man to put away his Wife?" tempting Him. And He Answered, and Said unto them, "What did Moses command you?" And they said, "Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away." And JESUS Answered, and Said unto them, "For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept. But from the Beginning of the Creation GOD Made them Male and Female. For this cause shall a Man leave his Father and Mother, and cleave to his Wife; and they Twain shall be one Flesh: so then they are no more Twain, but one Flesh. What, therefore, GOD hath Joined together, let not Man put asunder!" And in the house His Disciples asked him again of the same matter. And He Saith unto them, "Whosoever shall put away his Wife, and marry Another, committeth adultery against her; and if a Woman shall put away her Husband, and be married to Another, she committeth adultery."*—Chap. x, 2 to 12.

St. Luke relates that our SAVIOUR, on the Pharisees deriding Him, Said unto them, *Ye are they which justify yourselves before Men; but GOD Knoweth your hearts; for that, which is highly esteemed among Men, is Abomination in the Sight of GOD: Whosoever putteth away his Wife and marrieth Another, committeth adultery; and Whosoever marrieth her, that is put away from her Husband, committeth adultery.*—Luke xvi, 14, 15, 18.

St. Paul takes occasion to reason of Righteousness, in reference to this Commandment against the crime of adultery in the Mosaic Dispensation, saying, *Know ye not, Brethren, (for I speak to them that know the Law,) how that the Law hath dominion over a Man, as long as he liveth? For the Woman, which hath an Husband, is bound by the Law to her Husband, so long as he liveth: but if the Husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her Husband: so then, if, while her Husband liveth, she be married to another Man, she shall be called an Adulteress: but if her Husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no Adulteress, though she be married to another Man.* And from this carnal reasoning he draws the following Spiritual conclusions, saying, *Wherefore, my Brethren, ye also are*




*become dead to the Law, by the Body of CHRIST; that ye should be married to Another; even to Him, Who is Raised from the Dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto GOD; for when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the Law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death: but now we are Delivered from the Law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of Spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.*—Rom. vii, 1 to 6. Hence virtually urging us to divest ourselves of that hardness of heart, which alienated the Jews from the gentleness that Christianity inculcates; seeking to influence us to the adoption of Its Faith and the observance of Its Precepts.

△ Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto The LORD thine oaths. But I say unto you, Swear not at all! neither by HEAVEN, for It is GOD'S Throne; nor by the Earth, for it is His Footstool; neither by Jerusalem, for it is the City of The Great KING. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.—33 to 37.

Unnecessarily to seek to confirm one's word by an oath, even where it is true, is to trifle with sacred things, and to take GOD'S Holy Name in vain: by using it on ordinary occasions or in familiar communications, it must be an offence to Him, Whose MAJESTY Demands and is Entitled to our most reverential thoughts. But blasphemously to use It, and to invoke That Name in furtherance of a fraudulent purpose, how awful the responsibility awaiting the exposure of iniquity at that Day, when nothing that was in secret shall be hid; but all will be laid open from the inmost recesses of our Souls by An Omniscient GOD. Let us studiously avoid the use or countenance of an oath on all occasions, where it is not called for or sanctioned by Public Law; and then only submit to it as an ordinance of Man for The LORD'S Sake: but let us be especially careful to swear not at all, even on those occasions, unless to the truth and the whole truth; not keeping back any material fact, on whichever side it leans; and swearing, if necessary, to our own hurt or prejudice, rather than that Truth should not prevail. The using the exclamations "By GOD!" "I call GOD to Witness!" "It is as true as GOD is in HEAVEN!" "Upon my Soul!" "As I hope to be Saved!" and such like sayings, is contrary to the feelings of true piety, and of a becoming sense of the Awfulness of The DIVINE NATURE, and the Universality of The ALMIGHTY'S Knowledge: for the heart, that is touched with the true spirit of prayer and of communion with its GOD, never even utters That Sacred NAME, or alludes to the relation of Man to his MAKER, Infinite as He is in Power, and Perfect in Wisdom and Purity, Whose Throne is the Heavens, and the Earth but as His Footstool, without fear and trembling and the deepest reverence. If we do swear by His Name, it should be only when this holy fear is upon us, and we are disposed to serve Him truly and to promote His Cause and advocate His Glory, according to the Injunction of the Mosaic Ritual, *Thou shalt fear The LORD, thy GOD, and serve Him, and shalt swear by His Name.*—Deut. vi, 13. The Levitical Law, Proclaimed as from the Mouth of JEHOVAH, was, *Ye shall not swear by My Name falsely; neither shalt thou profane the Name of thy GOD.*—Levit. xix, 12. But if a vow be made in His Name, unless it be to do evil, it should be sacredly observed; though, if intended to work evil, it should be heartily repented of and atoned for, and by becoming penance should the Absolution of it be sought with fervent prayer. With Apostolic urgency St. James follows up the Exhortation of his LORD and MASTER, thus: *Above all things, my Brethren, swear not! neither by Heaven, neither by the Earth, neither by any other oath; but let your yea, be yea,*

and your nay, nay! lest ye fall into condemnation.—Chap. v, 12. It is probable our SAVIOUR Meant to Awaken in His Auditors the recollection of that beautiful passage in Isaiah, as the Words of THE MOST HIGH: *The Heaven is My Throne, and the Earth is My Footstool. Where is the House, that ye build unto Me? and Where is the Place of My Rest? For all Those Things hath Mine Hand Made; and all Those Things have been, Saith The LORD; but to this Man will I Look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite Spirit, and trembleth at My Word.*—Chap. lxvi, 1, 2.

*The City of The Great KING.* In reference to Jerusalem, our SAVIOUR, in His thus so glorifying the Mention of it, Seems to have Borne in Mind the honourable and Prophetic character given of It by David in the xlviii Psalm, where he breaks forth into singing, *Beautiful for situation, the Joy of the whole Earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the North, the City of The Great KING!*—verse 2. David, doubtless, Prophetically alluding to The MESSIAH Himself: and our SAVIOUR, Pointing to the Spiritual Jerusalem Wherein He Alone shall Reign, and of Which all Principalities and Power, and all Kindreds and People, shall eventually acknowledge Him Alone The KING Almighty, *for GOD will Establish It for Ever.*—verse 8. Indeed, in another place, David expressly calls it the City of GOD, saying, *Glorious Things are Spoken of thee, O City of GOD.*—Ps. lxxxvii, 3.

Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I Say unto you, That ye resist not evil; but Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also! And if any Man will sue thee at the Law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also! And Whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain!—38 to 41. 

*A soft answer turneth away wrath;* and the endurance of injury, at least without breaking out into the violence of resentment and retaliation, where remonstrance will not avail, will be found practically less hurtful to our own feelings, and less prejudicial, generally speaking, in its consequences than resistance and its effects. Hard as may seem this command over our passions to be obtained, it is within the power of All, by continual watchfulness, and preparing the mind thus to meet the infliction of injustice, not by giving way to our own wrath, and thereby working a greater evil to our own Souls, by expelling thence the Heavenly Peace which should dwell there; but by expostulation, where there can be any hope of its efficacy; and by silent and patient submission, where remonstrance may seem ineffectual. For such meekness and patience and forbearance, being in imitation of The Meek and Suffering and All-Enduring JESUS, cannot but be Acceptable to and tend to glorify the Cause both of Him, and of His and our FATHER, Which is in HEAVEN. Thus, in proportion to the prevalency of Christianity, would that peaceful disposition be propagated, which heartily cultivates charity with all Mankind, not only avoiding giving offence, but not retorting it, when offered, by violent and unchristian-like opposition; whereby Evil Doers would be put to silence and confounded in their own shame. That it would be better to incur a repetition of an injury, than by a vindictive spirit to endanger our present peace and future and Eternal happiness, must be admitted by every seriously-reflecting mind; and the Admonitions in the Text may admit of such an interpretation and qualification: since it would hardly be Meant that we should stimulate, as it were, Others to do greater wickedness or injustice than they had originally contemplated, or might otherwise have done: and the Example of CHRIST Himself, in Shunning Herod after John the Baptist's sacrifice by him; and as towards the Close of His Eventful Life we shall see that He Himself Acted, when Suffering under the smart of the very

indignity adverted to in the Text, He, addressing a Man, who had smote Him on the Cheek, Uttered these memorable Words, *If I have Spoken evil, bear witness of the evil! but, if well, why smitest thou Me?*—John xviii, 23. Opposition to injustice, to violence and oppression, is necessary to the well-being of Society; but then it should be conducted on Christian Principles, not in anger or from vexation, but in the spirit of CHRIST'S Reproof, and from an endeavour to check the spread of evil and to eradicate it from the heart of the Offender himself; in whom exposure or judicious remonstrance may work a relenting and repenting feeling; and help to save his Soul from the Wrath to Come.

Retaliation seems to have been one principle of the Mosaic Institution: *Eye for eye; tooth for tooth; hand for hand; foot for foot; Life for Life.*—Exod. xxi, 24. 23.—So Levit. xxiv, 20. *Breach for breach; eye for eye; tooth for tooth.*—Again in Deuteronomy xix, 21. How strong a proof this of the hardness of the Jewish heart; and of the need there was of Christian Grace, and both the Example and Precept of CHRIST to Soften it: Who Said even to His Disciples, *Ye know not what Spirit ye are of.* Indeed before the Advent of our SAVIOUR, Who Came to Inculcate, in its fullest Influence, Brotherly love and Charity, the immediate Son of David, through the wisdom with which he was pre-eminently Gifted, thus urged the cherishing a spirit of forbearance even under provocation: *Say not thou, "I will recompence evil;" but wait on The LORD! and He shall Save thee.*—Prov. xx, 22. When the Gospel Light, however, Shone Brightest upon Earth in the Apostolic days, St. Paul thus echoed the sentiment of his LORD and MASTER, and thus continues in like manner to admonish in this our day: *Recompence to no Man evil for evil! If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all Men!* adding affection to his admonition, *Dearly Beloved, Avenge not yourselves! but rather give place unto wrath! for it is Written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will Repay, Saith The LORD." Therefore, if thine Enemy hunger, feed him! if he thirst, give him drink! for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil; but overcome evil with good!*—Romans xii, 17 to 21. The same Apostle, in his 1st Epistle to the Thessalonians, pours forth the same admonitory doctrine: *Now we exhort you, Brethren, warn them that are unruly! be patient toward all Men! see that None render evil for evil unto any Man: but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all Men!*—Chap. v, 14, 15. St. Paul also discourages a spirit of litigation, which unhappily prevails not less now, than when he addressed himself to the Corinthian Converts, saying, *There is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law One with Another: Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?*—1 Cor. vi, 7.

In the same advocacy for Peace, as the very and essential element of Christianity, St. Peter thus winds up a course of Apostolic Lecture: *Finally, be ye All of one mind, having compassion One of Another; love as Brethren! be pitiful, be courteous! not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing; but contrariwise blessing: knowing that ye are thereunto Called, that ye should inherit a Blessing. For he, that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile; let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace and ensue it!* And then, by way of the fullest encouragement to do so, he adds, *For the Eyes of The LORD are over the Righteous, and His Ears are Open unto their prayers; but The Face of The LORD is against them, that do evil. And Who is he, that will harm you, if ye be Followers of that which is good? But, and if ye suffer for Righteousness' sake, happy are ye; and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled! but sanctify The LORD GOD in your hearts; and be ready always to give an answer to every Man, that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear: having a good conscience; that, whereas they*

*speak evil of you as of Evil-Doers, they may be ashamed, that falsely accuse your good conversation in CHRIST: for it is better, if the Will of GOD be so, that ye suffer for well-doing, than for evil-doing. For CHRIST also hath once Suffered for sins, The JUST for the Unjust; that He might Bring us unto GOD.—1 Peter iii, 8 to 18.*

St. Luke's narrative is thus: *Unto him, that smiteth thee on the one cheek, offer also the other! and him, that taketh away thy cloak, forbid not to take thy coat also!—Chap. vi, 29.*

Give to him that asketh thee! and from him, that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away!—42.

To give to All that ask, must be understood as confined to those, that are really poor, and just Objects of Charity: and then indeed, who, when reflecting that all things which he himself possesseth, he received from GOD, without money and without price, can for His Sake, Who Gave Himself for us, and Who hath Laid up in Store for them, who truly love Him, Treasures in HEAVEN, infinitely Greater than the Mind even can conceive, deny his Fellow-Creatures such bodily or Spiritual aid or consolation as he may stand in need of, whether as a gift or a loan. By the Mosaic Law even was it thus commanded: *If there be among you a poor Man of one of thy Brethren, within any of thy gates in thy Land, which The LORD thy GOD Giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor Brother; but thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth: thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved, when thou givest unto him; because that for this thing The LORD, thy GOD, shall Bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto. For the Poor shall never cease out of the Land: therefore I Command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy Brother, to thy Poor, and to thy Needy in thy Land.—Deut. xv, 7 to 11.*

According to St. Luke, the Advice of our Blessed SAVIOUR was thus further Extended: *Give to every Man, that asketh of thee; and of him, that taketh away thy goods, ask them not again! And as ye would that Men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise! For if ye love them, which love you, what thank have ye? for Sinners also love those, that love them. And if ye lend to them, of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for Sinners also lend to Sinners, to receive as much again.—Chap. vi, 30 to 34.* The total absence of Selfishness, the most disinterested and generous dealings towards All with whom we have communication, or whose wants are made known to us, is thus meant to be inculcated: only a justifiable discretion should be used, that we may not, by indiscriminate charity or too profuse liberality encourage imposition or profligacy, or feed extravagance or indolence. The Flow of Admonition (according to St. Luke) did not stop here, for The MESSIAH thus Went on: *Love ye your Enemies! and do good and lend! hoping for nothing again: and your Reward shall be great: and ye shall be the Children of THE HIGHEST; for He is Kind to the Unthankful and to the Evil! Be ye, therefore, merciful, as your FATHER also is Merciful! Give! and it shall be Given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over shall Men give into your bosom: for with the same measure that ye mete withal, it shall be measured to you again.—Chap. vi, 35 to 38.* As, however, to give or lend without interest or return, might be encouraging idleness or prodigality, so to withhold from All under such a pretence and distrust, would be narrow-minded and selfish. It is our duty, and should be made our business, to seek out worthy Objects of our bounty and support, and so to apportion our own expenditure by the rules of Christian economy, as to have

wherewithal to give or lend, as occasion may require or prudence and propriety recommend. The Persons most deservedly entitled to our countenance or favour, are generally those who most shrink, through meekness and diffidence, from putting forth a claim to it. And though All of us may not have the power to give this World's good, yet All, even the Poorest amongst us, may, in the salutary and comprehensive scope of Christian charity, give that Spiritual comfort and help, which may enure unto Everlasting Life: and the Poor, who stand in need of such assistance, are found in all Ranks of Life, from the Palace to the Cottage.

The precepts of the wise Son of Sirach very much harmonize with the Text: *He that is merciful will lend unto his Neighbour; and he that strengtheneth his hand, keepeth the Commandments. Lend to thy Neighbour in time of his need; and pay thou thy Neighbour again in due season! Many have refused to lend for other Men's ill-dealing, fearing to be defrauded: yet have thou patience with a Man in poor estate, and delay not to shew him mercy! Help the Poor for the Commandment's sake, and turn him not away because of his poverty!*—*Ecclesiasticus* xxxix, 1, 2. 7. 9. Similar sentiments may be gathered from another Apocryphal Writer: *Give alms of thy substance! and when thou givest alms, let not thine eye be envious; neither turn thy face from any Poor! and the Face of GOD shall not be Turned away from thee! If thou hast abundance, give alms accordingly! if thou hast but a little, be not afraid to give of that little! for thou layest up a good treasure for thyself against the day of necessity. Give of thy bread to the Hungry, and of thy garments to them that are naked!*—*Tobit* iv, 7 to 11.


△ Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy Neighbour, and hate thine Enemy. But I Say unto you, Love your Enemies! bless them, that curse you! do good to them, that hate you! and pray for them, which despitefully use you and persecute you! that ye may be the Children of your FATHER, Which is in Heaven; for He Maketh His Sun to rise on the Evil and on the Good; and Sendeth Rain on the Just and on the Unjust. For if ye love them, which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the Publicans the same? And if ye salute your Brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the Publicans so.—43 to 47.

The forgiveness of injuries is one of the most distinguishing and beautiful features in the Christian Character. CHRIST Himself Came as Man upon Earth, that He might, as GOD in Heaven, Forgive Man the injuries and injustice Received from Man. A Doctrine This, Which, however hostile to the proud and haughty minds of the Unregenerate, it is essential to our Salvation, both to learn and receive into our hearts, that having admitted It as an Article of Faith, we should vitally adopt and exemplify It; and the result of a close and fond adherence to It, will be big with peace and Heavenly Consolation. To love them, who manifest love towards ourselves, is natural, and is in nothing differing from the disposition of the Brute Creation generally; but to love our Enemies, and strive to bring them within the Pale of Salvation; to bless them with the tidings of Peace, who curse and vilify us; to do good, and to pray to The FOUNTAIN of Mercy for them, that hate, and shamefully use or abuse us; to exert our influence towards the conversion of their hearts from the error of their ways, is to do good indeed, and to follow in the closest possible way the Example of our Great LORD and MASTER; and will, if it be done in the faith and for the Honour of The SON of GOD, insure, most effectually, our being Exalted to the truly dignified and ennobling Rank of the Children of our FATHER, Which is in Heaven.

Not only by Precept, but by Example did the Blessed JESUS Manifest the Heavenly-mindedness of This Principle. Amidst all the horrors of the Cross and the revilings of His Murderers and Blasphemers, He Prayed to His FATHER

to *Forgive them*.—Luke xxiii, 34. And in imitation of His adored MASTER, the Martyr St. Stephen called on JESUS, with his dying breath, in the hearing of them who were stoning him to death, saying, *Lay not this sin to their charge!*—Acts vii, 60. The great Apostle of the Gentiles, who suffered so much for the Sake and Name of CHRIST, said, *being reviled, we bless, being persecuted, we suffer it; being defamed, we entreat*.—1 Cor. iv, 12, 13. St Luke's Version of this Address of our SAVIOUR, intermixed with other Passages, is thus: *I Say unto you, which hear, Love your Enemies! do good to them which hate you! bless them, that curse you! and pray for them, which despitefully use you! For if ye love them, which love you, what thank have ye? for Sinners also love those, that love them: and if ye do good to them, which do good to you, what thank have ye? for Sinners also do even the same: and if ye lend to them, of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for Sinners also lend to Sinners, to receive as much again: but love ye your Enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again! and your Reward shall be great, and ye shall be the Children of The HIGHEST; for He is Kind to the Unthankful and the Evil*.—Luke vi, 27, 28, and 32 to 35.

The Apostle St. Paul follows up this heart-improving and Heaven-preparing Counsel of The SON of The MOST HIGH, saying, *Bless them, which persecute you! bless and curse not! If thine Enemy hunger, feed him! if he thirst, give him drink! for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head: he not overcome of evil; but overcome evil with good!*—Rom. xii. 14, 20, 21. And not only did he inculcate this doctrine, but he proved its efficacy and practicability by adopting it, as the above quotation from the iv chapter of the 1 Corinthians so fully shews. St. Peter also illustrates the same Salutory Truth, a Truth which is peculiarly characteristic of the influence of Christian Faith, and which neither Jew nor Gentile would otherwise have learned, saying, *This is thank-worthy if a Man, for conscience toward GOD, endure grief, suffering wrongfully: for what glory is it (he asks) if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is Acceptable with GOD: for even hereunto were ye Called; because CHRIST also Suffered for us, Leaving us an Example, that we should follow His Steps; Who did no sin; neither was guile found in His Mouth; Who, when He was reviled, Reviled not again; when He Suffered, He Threatened not; but Committed Himself to Him, That Judgeth Righteously*.—1 Peter, ii, 19 to 23.

Be ye, therefore, perfect! even as your FATHER, Which is in Heaven, is Perfect.—48. 


Though perfection be not attainable by Man, yet it is equally our interest as our duty to strive to approach That PATTERN of all Perfection, Who Went about Doing Good, and Gave Himself a Ransom for All; Seeking to Save, by the Sacrifice of Himself, That, which was or would otherwise have been irretrievably lost. Let us, therefore, strive, according to the Working of The HOLY SPIRIT, Which Worketh in every One of us more or less Mightily, as we more or less yield to Its Gracious Influence, to be Followers in Spirit and Truth of JESUS, our Great HIGH PRIEST. May it be our earnest effort to be *Presented perfect before GOD in CHRIST JESUS*: [Col. i, 28, 29.] *labouring fervently that we may stand perfect and complete in all the Will of GOD*: [Col. iv, 12.] *letting patience, by the trial of our faith, have her perfect work, that we may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing*. [James i, 3, 4.] *As He, Which hath Called us is Holy, so (as admonishes St. Peter,) may we be holy in all manner of conversation*.—1 Peter i, 15. And again, we draw this counsel from St. Paul, to be *Followers of GOD, as dear Children!*—Ephes. v, 1. JEHOVAH'S Injunction to Abram was, *Walk before Me, and be thou perfect!*—Gen. xvii, 1. And the same obedi-

ence unto Holiness, that won Abraham a name of Blessedness for ever, would win for Each of us a State of Eternal Blessedness, by the influence of that faith, by which he knew in Whom he trusted. The Levitical Law abounded with The DIVINE Exhortations to be *Holy*; and the mighty and weighty reason for becoming so was, Because *The LORD GOD of the Hebrews* (unlike the Gods of the Heathen,) was *Holy*.—Lev. xi, 44, and xix, 2. With Abraham's faith, may we, who have the Fulness of Gospel Light to Guide us on our way, strive to have his practice; and to lay to heart this Law of perfection both from the Old and New Testament!

△ CHAP. vi.—Take heed that ye do not your alms before Men to be seen of them! otherwise ye have no Reward of your FATHER, Which is in Heaven. Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee! as the Hypocrites do in the Synagogues and in the Streets, that they may have glory of Men! Verily I Say unto you, They have their reward. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth! that thine alms may be in secret; and thy FATHER, Which Seeth in Secret, Himself shall Reward thee openly.—1 to 4.

To profess to act from the pure love of CHRIST and for His Sake, in any works of charity, in which we engage, and to pursue our general course of Life, in our dealings with any of our Fellow-Creatures, solely from the motive of doing Him Honour, and observing His Precepts, when our conscience tells us, that we are actuated by a desire of and thirst after the praise of Men, rather than of GOD, is to Awaken Displeasure in Him, Who Knoweth all the workings of our hearts and minds, and Who, in His Judgment upon us, when this Life has passed away, and Eternity opens upon our terror-struck view, will no more Delight in us, nor Seek to Do us Good; but will Leave us to the corrodings of remorse and desolation and despair as the bitter fruits of our folly and hypocrisy. Indeed, even in the Life that is, to let the good we seem to do, be done with the inward hope of gaining fame among Men, is the most narrow-sighted policy that can be acted upon, since it deprives us of the most grateful sensations, which inseparably accompany a good deed done from good motives, and substitutes for an eternal Reward, in the Approbation and Favour of GOD, the short-lived, precarious, and unsatisfying applause of Man,—an applause which would terminate, in sober and reflecting minds, on the discovery of the sinister motive that led to its production. In the acts of useful and beneficial tendency towards Others, let us, therefore, be guided by a sense of the Boundless Goodness and Munificence of GOD towards Ourselves, and of the deep and lasting Obligation we are individually under to Him for All we have or hope for; and when we give our labour or our wealth, our counsel or our influence to our poorer Brethren, to do it heartily as unto The LORD. *Love towards our Fellow-Beings, to be Acceptable to GOD, should be without dissimulation*; [Rom. xii, 9.] being the offspring of that *Faith, which, like the Wisdom from Above, is full of mercies and of good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy*. Where a name in support of a Public Charity is desirable, let it not be withheld; for it behoves us not to be ashamed of CHRIST JESUS! But where the publication of our name can answer no beneficial end, it may better be withheld, as thereby we may accustom ourselves to feel that we are acting as the Instruments merely of GOD'S Goodness, as Stewards of the different talents He hath Entrusted us to employ in His Service and for His Honour; and to rest contented, as well we may, with His Gracious Promise of Accepting such our fulfilment of an obvious duty, as done unto Himself, and as therefore entitling us, through the engrafted Merits of our SAVIOUR, to a Participation in That Inestimable Return Which shall be Openly Made us in the Life to Come, even an Endless Continuance of His Love. St. Paul's admonition as to this portion of

the Christian Character is thus beautifully given: *He that giveth, let him do it with simplicity! he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness!*—Rom. xii, 8. And The Same DIVINE ORACLE of Truth, our SAVIOUR Himself, did, on another occasion, Strengthen and Enlarge upon This Precept in the Text, Saying, *When thou makest an entertainment, call not thy Friends, nor thy Brethren, neither thy Kinsmen, nor thy rich Neighbours! lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the Poor, the Maimed, the Lame, the Blind! and thou shalt be Blessed: for they cannot recompense thee; for thou shalt be Repcompensed at the Resurrection of the Just.*—Luke xiv, 12 to 14. Though from the very tenor of the words in the Text, *Take heed that ye do not your alms before Men to be seen of them!* it may be inferred that our SAVIOUR did not so much Intend Restraining His Disciples from doing alms in public; as from so doing them on an impulse of worldly-mindedness, and from a motive so irreverential towards GOD, and so unspiritual as to seek the plaudits of Men; for as we have before seen, It is CHRIST'S Commandment to *let our light shine before Men, that they may see our good works, and glorify our FATHER, Which is in Heaven.*—Chap. v, 16.

And when thou prayest, thou shall not be as the Hypocrites are; for they love to pray  standing in the Synagogues and in the corners of the Streets, that they may be seen of Men. Verily I Say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet; and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy FATHER, Which is in Secret! And thy FATHER, Which Seeth in Secret, shall Reward thee Openly.—5, 6.

If giving alms to catch the praise of Men be an offence in the motive-Searching Mind of GOD, and win from Him no Countenance or Favour, the utterance of prayer, as professedly addressed to Him, from no desire of heartfelt communion with Him, but only to gather confidence and respect from short-sighted Fellow-Mortals, is, of necessity, not only to incur the Displeasure of The MOST HIGH, but to endanger the Visitation of His Irreversible Sentence of Rejection. Thus to lie unto GOD, by hypocritically addressing Him, when the heart denies or disregards Him, is daringly to set at nought the Power and Omniscience of The ALMIGHTY, and to invite the Exercise of That Power in unsparing Chastisement, if not in Time, in Eternity. The very thought of such impiety in a Creature so helpless and dependant as Man, deriving every thing he has, or should rest a justifiable hope upon, from The BEING so neglected or defied, fills the thinking Soul with the most awful apprehension for the final destiny of such Hypocrisy. Let us, therefore, pray in public with the Spirit and in sincerity; and let us pray in private with constancy and earnestness, and on each occasion, as in the Immediate Presence and, as it were, under the Eye and Ear of GOD, that the idea of courting thereby the praise of Men may be far from our hearts; though it may Please The Wise DISPOSER of all hearts, to Superadd that, which only yields lasting satisfaction when deservedly conferred.

To him, who prays only to be seen of Men, can there arise no possible hope of his prayer being granted: but, on the contrary, a very reasonable fear that *his prayer* does, in itself, *become sin*, and that against GOD. [Ps. cix, 7.] Whereas, to the rich consolation and just hope of Such, as in a true faith pray to The GOD Who Heareth prayer, is offered the Apostolic assurance, that *the fervent prayer of a Righteous Man availeth much*: [James v, 16.] and therefore they, who thus pray, have not only the Promise of a Reward, and that of an Inestimable and Interminable Value, to be Openly Given them before Men and Angels, in the World to Come, but have the reasonable expectation of having their prayers granted, in the Life that is, by Him, Who Ever hath Respect to the prayers of His Servants; and *Whose Delight is in the prayer of the Upright.*—Prov. xv, 8.



At morning and at evening and at noon-day should we, as we can gain opportunity, commune with our own heart, and direct our prayer unto The LORD; and yet should we not neglect the assembling of ourselves together to give glory unto Him, and to give, publicly, thanks for a remembrance of His Holiness; that both secretly and amongst the Faithful in our Generation, we may be found to have set our hearts right with The MOST HIGH. See Psalm cix, 30, and cxi, 1.

But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the Heathen do! for they think that they shall be Heard for their much speaking. Be not ye, therefore, like unto them! for your FATHER Knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask Him.—7, 8.

To please the ears of Men, long and laboured compositions may, in prayers, be most successful, if not indispensably necessary to awaken attention and excite interest: but when the heart, which is full of the holy fear, and only anxious for the Favour of GOD, dictates what the lips shall utter, the form is simple and concise. To seek for the Pardon and Peace of GOD, for the Guidance and Sanctifying Graces of His HOLY SPIRIT to lead us unto all holiness and righteousness, and fit us for the discharge of all our relative duties to GOD, our Neighbours, and ourselves; and to plead for the Efficacy of CHRIST'S Atonement and Mediation towards the Salvation of our Soul in Immortality, are the grand and primary objects of prayer; and, if obtained, embrace everything that can be reasonably wanted or justifiably sought for: since GOD, Who is more Willing to Give than we to ask, Knoweth whereof we have need, and is Actuated by Consummate Wisdom, as well as the most Perfect Benevolence, equally in what He Withholds as in What He Grants. Let us, therefore, after the admonition of the wisest of Men, *keep our feet, when we go to the House of GOD; and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of Fools: and let us not be rash with our mouths; neither let our hearts be hasty to utter any thing before GOD; but remember that GOD is in Heaven, and that we are upon Earth, and therefore should our words to Him be few.*—Eccles. v, 1, 2.

△ After this manner therefore pray ye! "Our FATHER, Which art in Heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name! Thy Kingdom Come! Thy Will be Done in Earth, as It is in Heaven! Give us this day our daily bread! And Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our Debtors! And Lead us not into temptation; but Deliver us from Evil! For Thine is the KINGDOM, and the Power and the Glory, for Ever.—Amen."—9 to 13.

*Our FATHER, Which art in Heaven!* How endearing and encouraging this Appellation, Sanctioned by The SON of GOD Himself, when Clothed in Human Nature to Reconcile Man to GOD! And though The Omniscient GOD-HEAD cannot but be every where and at all times Present, in Earth as well as in Heaven; yet, as HE is not here Visible to us, but is so Where Angels and Immortal Spirits are witnessing and exulting in the Fulness of His Glory, we are, therefore, led to contemplate and address Him as in Heaven, the undisputed Region of His Power and Holiness, that our minds may be impressed with the most elevating sense of His MAJESTY, as well as with the deepest veneration for His NATURE.

*Hallowed be Thy Name!* O that such an Admonition should be necessary! that we should need any other excitement than what we see around us and experience within us, to hallow That Name, by Whose Power all Things that are, were Created and are Upheld; from Whom all our faculties and properties, both of Body and Mind, Emanate; and Who, to the Benefit of our Creation, Adds the Inestimable Blessing of the Free-Will offering of Sanctification, Redemption, and Salvation unto an Eternity of the purest and most perfect Happiness in a state of Immortality, if we will but hallow, in spirit and in truth,

That Name, at Which Angels bow with the profoundest reverence, and pronounce to be MOST HOLY. May we, therefore, with the deepest adoration of A BEING so Great, so Perfect, so Pure, so Mighty, and yet so Benificent and so Merciful, utter His Name at all times with the most heart-prompted respect, and with a due consideration of the Character That Belongs to It, and Which it is our highest privilege as well as duty to praise.

*THY KINGDOM Come!* The KINGDOM of GOD is Where Righteousness and Holiness universally Prevail, even in the heart of Man, if those Qualities abide there. If, therefore, we set our hearts right with GOD, His KINGDOM will Embrace our bosoms and Spread there the Reign of Heavenly Peace. We thus, therefore, virtually pray that GOD may Reign in our hearts by faith, in all uprightness and integrity and purity and pious devotion and holy fear, and in all Self-government, and in perfect charity, through the Efficacy of CHRIST, The SON'S Mediation, and through the Blessed Influence of The HOLY SPIRIT; so that at our SAVIOUR'S Second Coming unto Universal Dominion, and when He shall Judge the congregated World in Righteousness, He may Find us, whether Called from the Quick or Dead, with our Spiritual Wedding garments on, and with our Heavenly Lamps trimmed, waiting in patience and in humble hope the Great Day of His Coming in the Glories of That Beatific Power, Which will Embrace all the hearts of His Saints.

*THY Will be Done in Earth, as It is in Heaven!* The Will of GOD is, that Righteousness and Holiness and Universal Charity should prevail, and that every Soul of Mankind, that doeth these things, and thus fulfilleth the Good Pleasure of his CREATOR, should, through CHRIST, be Blessed with His Peculiar Countenance and Favour, both in this Life, and in That Which is to Come. And indeed who, that thus seek to please GOD, are not, in the very effort and exercise of the Office, visited with feelings of the most heart felt and lasting delight, in the contemplation of the unspeakable Love with Which it is sure to be Repaid; experiencing in the recesses of their Souls, the truest happiness that can be found upon Earth? If That Will of The MOST HIGH, ~~All~~ Whose Tendency is for Good, were indeed ~~done~~ on Earth, as It is in Heaven by every Spirit there, from the Least unto the Greatest, what a Blessedness would diffuse itself over the State of Society here: Earth would be as but an Antepast of The Heavenly Inheritance. By Example and Precept our Meek and Suffering SAVIOUR Commanded us to do the Will of His FATHER and our FATHER, Which is in Heaven. It is the Gracious Will of The ALMIGHTY that All should be Saved, if they will but walk worthy of His High Calling through faith in CHRIST JESUS, The MEDIATOR. But, if we neglect so Great Salvation, the perverseness of our own Self-will must bring on us swift and everlasting destruction from the possession of His Favour, and from the Glory of His Power. In the direction and utterance of our thoughts, and in the nature and tendency of our actions, let us ever bear in mind that, Known and Foreknown as they are unto the Mind of The LORD, if they are directed in subserviency to His Will, they will be Acceptable in His Sight, on Whom our Everlasting Destinies depend. Even under the severest trials should we bow to The DIVINE Dispensations; and like St. Paul, when Prophetically viewing and avowing the bonds and death that awaited him, though importuned by his Followers and Friends to refrain from exposing himself to them, he declared his readiness to die for the Name of The LORD JESUS, and by his faith and firmness, induced those Followers to acquiesce in his determination, and to say, with him, *The Will of The LORD be Done!*—Acts xxi, 14.

*Give us this day our daily bread!* Since we know not what a day may bring forth, let us be content with the moderate provision thereof, and not be too eager

after the fleeting and unnecessary things pertaining to this Life. To rise up early and late take rest, only to eat more of the bread of carefulness, is not becoming a Christian course, which should have its highest attention and devotedness paid to the partaking of the Bread of Life Eternal, of that Spiritual Manna, which is Showered down from Heaven for the Sustenance and Rejoicing of the hearts of the Faithful. How unwise is it, with respect to our Immortal Interest, to add field to field and house to house, and exult ourselves in the abundance of what the World (which is at enmity with GOD,) terms the good things of this Life, and eagerly to grasp at those riches which, when Death comes upon us, we cannot carry away with us; and to make no provision for the Life, which, when once begun, shall never end. On the contrary, the true wisdom and the surest way to happiness, is to receive, as from the Hand of The LORD, with thankfulness and cheerfulness, Whatever He may Graciously Apportion us from day to day to have, as the food convenient for us; using it with temperance, and diffusing it, if over-abundant, with hospitality and charity. Our hunger and thirst should be after righteousness and holiness of Life, and after that rich and animating Provision for the Soul, even *Every Word, That Proceedeth out of the Mouth of GOD*; Which, like the pious Job, *we should esteem infinitely more than our necessary food.*—Chap. xxiii, 12.

*Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us!* That GOD, Who Delighteth in Mercy, and Knoweth the need we have of It, Needeth not to be thus Called upon to Shew Mercy, and more especially as a recompense for a kindness and forbearance practised by us towards any of our Fellow-Mortals, might seem to be the conviction of a piously reflecting mind, and induce to the conclusion rather that we should pray that He, by the Grace of His HOLY SPIRIT, would Influence our hearts to be tenderly considerate and compassionate towards the negligences, the errors, and the imperfections of Others, that we might in spirit follow His Own Great and Glorious Example in the Wondrous Love, the Unwearied Forbearance, and Unrecompensed Care Shewn by Him towards Ourselves, His unworthy and trespassing Creatures and everlasting Debtors. For if GOD only Dealt out His Pardon after the miserably sparing measure with which we dole out forgivenesses to Others for their offences and injustice towards us, how hopeless would be the prospect of That Perfect Reconciliation, Which would be Followed by His Eternal Favour! In uttering this part of the prayer, it may seem becoming in us to consider that we are, in the first instance, humbly yet earnestly, to pour forth the supplication under a conviction of and sorrow for our manifold trespasses against The MAJESTY of HEAVEN; and, from the inmost workings of our Souls, to seek, first, The DIVINE Forgiveness through faith in our SAVIOUR'S Expiatory Mediation,—and, secondly, under the persuasion that He is more Ready to Give than we to ask, and that He will assuredly Grant Remission and Forgiveness to All, who with a contrite heart and lively faith seek Them. And then let us implore Him to Lead our hearts, by His Softening Grace, to a benevolent consideration for the Souls of Others, however guilty of vices, as well as weaknesses, in the true spirit of Christian Charity, and to forgive them their trespasses, even as GOD, so Infinitely Mercifully Disposed towards us, is Willing and Ready to Forgive our far exceeding trespasses against Him: Learning in Mind the Answer Given by That PATTERN of all Excellence and Personification of DIVINE Mercy, to the question put by St. Peter, *How oft shall my Brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?* JESUS Saith unto him, *I Say not unto thee, Until seven times; but Until seventy times seven!*—Matt. xviii, 21, 22.

△ *And Lead us not into temptation!* That this Life is a state of trial and should be so, as a scene of preparation for an Eternal Existence hereafter, we all

readily admit; that temptations constitute those trials, is as undeniable; but that our CREATOR hath Given us Grace to enable us, if we will but wisely use It, to resist and overcome all evil, and with every temptation has Left a way of escape open to us, if we will but avail ourselves of it, is as indisputable: we should, therefore, in spirit pray, not that we may not be led into temptation, but that we may not be exposed to temptation, when we are not inclined to use the Means Which The ALMIGHTY, by His HOLY SPIRIT, so Freely and Graciously Offers us to empower us to rise superior to the trial; and more especially that our iniquities should not have so accumulated, and our rejection of This DIVINE Aid been so persevering, as to leave us an easy prey to the Tempter, and become the Victims of Satan and his subtle devices to ensnare our Souls. May we continually rest on That Anchor of all Spiritual hope, and That Only Rock of Salvation, Which will Secure us against any fatal effect of the trials of our faith; and then, indeed, may we, with St. James, *count it all joy, when we fall into temptations; knowing this, that the trying of our faith worketh patience; and that if we let patience have its perfect work, we shall be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.*—Jas. i, 2 to 4. At the same time let us guard against too much confidence in DIVINE Aid, or too much presumption in our imagined title to It, from any assumed merits of our own: and, on the contrary, let us, *when we most think we stand, take peculiar heed lest we fall!* agreeably to St. Paul's admonition to the Corinthians, 1st, x, 12. Let us watch and pray that we enter not into a state of temptation, for which we may not have provided ourselves with That Protection, Which Cometh from Above, and Which only Waiteth to be called for in the spirit of meekness and supplication, being ever Ready to be Visited upon us: for to the Faithful, GOD is Faithful in All His Promises of Protection: *For The LORD Knoweth how to Deliver the Godly out of temptations.*—2 Peter ii, 9. And to them, that endure unto the end in their resistance of the Evil One, and the evil suggestions of their own hearts and minds, He, That Silenced and Overcame the Tempter, and Taught and Urged us to do likewise, through the supplicated Agency of The HOLY SPIRIT, hath Said, even to Such as *keep the Word of His Patience, that He will Keep them from the hour of temptation, which hath or will come upon all the World, to try them that dwell upon the Earth:* the Same Mighty SAVIOUR Strengthening the Promise by the Admonition to *hold That fast, Which we have already Received from His Grace, that no Man take our Crown of Glory from us:* and Superadding the Blissful Prospect, that *them, who so overcome temptation, will He Make Pillars in the Temple of His GOD; and will Write upon them the Name of His GOD, and the Name of the City of His GOD, Which is New Jerusalem, Which Cometh down out of Heaven from His GOD; and will Write upon them His New Name.*—Rev. iii, 10 to 12. It was the Prayer of our Blessed REDEEMER, when on Earth, to His HEAVENLY FATHER, on behalf of those, whom That FATHER had Given Him amongst the Sons and Daughters of the true faith, that *He would Keep them from the evil.*—John xvii, 9. 15. And What He then Prayed for as Man, He now, as ONE with THE FATHER and THE HOLY SPIRIT, Truly and Unweariedly Performs.

Though we should even glory in exposures to temptations for the Honour of Him, Who thus Enables us effectually to resist them, and thereby contribute to the manifestation of His Power and Goodness and Holiness; yet should we most devoutly pray to be Delivered from the evil of Self-confidence, and of rushing, unprepared, into the dangers of Spiritual or carnal temptations; and never arrogate to ourselves the power of opposing and the merit of subduing, singly and unassistedly, temptations and trials. But in the instant and first dawning of their risings, fly to That Ever-Present, though Invisible Succour of The HOLY

SPIRIT, and to the Word and Counsel of GOD, and the Example of His SON, to Fortify our Souls for the conflict. As to resist the Devil is to make him flee from us, the Example of That SAVIOUR Taught us that such resistance should be grounded on the Power and Word of GOD, Who will, when earnestly and faithfully Sought so to Do, Give us His Grace, Which is Abundantly Sufficient for us; and Who, Gathering us under His Wing, will Deliver us from the Evil One.

△ *For Thine is The KINGDOM and the Power and the Glory for ever and ever!* As all Things were Created of GOD, and without Him was not any Thing Made, that was Made, so is every Thing dependant on Him, and by Him doth subsist, and is subjected to His Dominion: His, therefore, truly is That KINGDOM, Which Ruleth over All, and Which shall know no end. And to His Power all Principalities and Powers, both in Heaven and in Earth, are subservient: and the Glory, Which is and ever has been His admissively in Heaven, should be submissively acknowledged to be His upon Earth, throughout all Generations, and amongst all People and Nations and Languages: *For Thine, O LORD, (to use the Inspired language of the Man after Thine Own Heart, the sweet Psalmist of Israel,) is the Greatness and the Power and the Glory and the Victory and the MAJESTY; for All that is in the Heaven and in the Earth, is Thine: Thine is The KINGDOM, O LORD; and Thou art Exalted as HEAD Above All. Both Riches and Honour Come of Thee; and Thou Reignest over All: and in Thine Hand is Power and Might; and in Thine Hand it is to Make Great, and to Give Strength unto All.*—1 Chron. xxix, 11, 12.

*Amen.* And of a Prayer, thus adapted to all wants and accommodated to all Conditions, should All, who hear it read, following it in sincerity and in faith, and, cherishing the pious emotions it is intended to excite, publicly avow the adoption in all its parts, by adding, at its conclusion, audibly and emphatically the word, *Amen*: signifying a virtual and heartfelt acquiescence in it: thus offering to Others, as well as to their GOD and SAVIOUR, the pledge and earnest of their having reflected on and inwardly felt and applied the sense of the Supplication so DIVINELY Prompted, in all its parts, by the utterance of this single though comprehensive word, *Amen*.

△ *For, if ye forgive Men their trespasses, your Heavenly FATHER will also Forgive you. But, if ye forgive not Men their trespasses, neither will your FATHER Forgive your trespasses.*—14, 15.

To the truly pious Soul, such a conviction of the heinousness of sin in the Sight of A Pure and Holy GOD, and such an overwhelming depression from the consciousness of offences committed and duties left undone and opportunities left unimproved, in a sad array of charges of Self-condemnation arise, that in the Spirit of Christian humility and meekness, he does not regard any Other of his Fellow-Mortals, unless Such as openly and daringly deny and defy the Existence or the Power and Goodness of GOD, to be more offending against The DIVINE MAJESTY than himself. He is, therefore, prompted by the sense of his own need of Pardon from on HIGH, and the hope, through CHRIST'S Mediation, that his sins may be Blotted out or Remembered no more, to look with an eye of tender compassion and ready forgiveness on the Persons of Wrong-Doers towards himself, and is glad, and counteth it as an occasion of inward joy when, witnessing a spirit of sorrow for injuries done him, he can stretch forth the hand of forgiveness and reconciliation. It is thus that his hope is magnified, that GOD may in Judgment Have Mercy on him a Sinner. And not only does this Spirit spread its Influence even unto the Heavens, but, by its powerful though silent admonition, is calculated to enlarge the sphere of that Charity, which, though it suffereth long, doth never lose its kindness: thus also

teaching Offenders not only to go and sin no more, but to extend to Others that gracious and generous and forbearant treatment, which they themselves have, probably with much less justifiable claim, experienced. And let us consider of what comparative nothingness in value is any measure of pardon that we can deal out to the most Offensive of our Fellow-Creatures, when contrasted with the Effect of DIVINE Mercy towards ourselves: how little and for how short a season can the efficacy of our leniency operate: and it often is instantly and richly recompensed by the peace of mind and inward satisfaction it communicates. But the Forgiveness of GOD thus Promised us for an act, which cannot benefit Him, (being confined in its operation to a like Offender against Him with ourselves, and bringing with it pleasurable reflections in the instant of its execution, and contributing, perhaps, to make of a former Foe a firm Friend,) Produces that Perfect Reconciliation to The DIVINE NATURE, Which will, through the Merits of CHRIST, Insure us the fulness of Spiritual Joy in that Life which, when it comes, shall never end. How awful, too, is it to contemplate the converse of this Comforting Assurance, that for withholding forgiveness from our Fellows, or visiting with severity their injustice or offences, there is a fearful looking-for of Judgment, since we should thereby have passed judgment without mercy. May we give and forgive, and bear and forbear, that we may be like our HEAVENLY FATHER, Who Freely Gave us All we have, Made us what we are, Implanting in us an Immortal Spirit, Extending to us the Sanctifying Influence of His Grace, and Yielding up His Only SON to be a Sacrifice for our sins and The MEDIATOR for our Salvation. By the wise Son of Sirach it was said, *He, that revengeth, shall find Vengeance from The LORD; and He will surely Keep his sins in remembrance: (and he thus admonishes,) Forgive thy Neighbour the hurt, that he hath done unto thee! so shall thy sins also be Forgiven when thou prayest. One Man beareth hatred against Another; and doth he seek Pardon from The LORD? He sheweth no mercy to a Man, which is like himself; and doth he ask Forgiveness of his own sins? If he, that is but Flesh, nourish hatred, who will intreat for Pardon of his sins? Remember thine end, and let enmity cease! remember corruption and death! remember the Commandments; and bear no malice to thy Neighbour!*—Ecclus. xxviii, 1 to 7. In the same spirit of Heaven-Taught Gentleness and Compassion and Tender Loving-Kindness, St. Paul exhorts that *all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamour and evil-speaking be put away with all malice; and that we be kind One to Another, tender-hearted, forgiving One Another, even as GOD, for CHRIST'S Sake, is Willing to Forgive us!* [Ephe. iv, 31, 32.] and again he urges us to put on, *as the Elect of GOD, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing One Another, and forgiving One Another, if Any have a quarrel against Any; even as CHRIST Forgiveth.*—Col. iii, 12, 13. Let us remember also the awful warning from the Apostle James, that *we may expect Judgment without Mercy, if we have shewed no mercy; For Mercy rejoiceth against Judgment.*—Chap. ii, 13.

St. Mark's version of the Text is, *When ye stand praying, forgive! if ye have ought against any; that your FATHER also, Which is in Heaven, may Forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your FATHER, Which is in Heaven, Forgive your trespasses.*—Chap. xi, 25, 26.

Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the Hypocrites, of a sad countenance! For they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto Men to fast: Verily I Say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face! that thou appear not unto Men to fast; but unto thy FATHER, Which is in Secret; and thy FATHER, Which Seeth in Secret, shall Reward thee Openly!—16 to 18.

As sincerity can alone be Acceptable to The GOD of Truth; and as He

Knows and Foreknows all our thoughts and all the inmost workings of our Souls, if we fast to draw on us only the applause of Men, making a merit of the performance of our duty, GOD Penetrates the motive, that actuates us, and leaves us to reap that fruit of deadliness to Spiritual Life, the impoisoning praise of Men, which we so have chosen, in preference to the Approbation of our Everlasting FATHER, Whose Meed of Praise Administers, with the Bread of Life, a Joy That passeth not away; and Which, should our fasting be the effect of a deep reverence for Him, and a desire of a more free communion with Him, He, by His Ministering SPIRIT, will Freely Give us. Indeed how contemptible, upon reflection, must Persons feel even unto themselves, who can thus weakly and wickedly practise hypocrisy towards The SEARCHER of all hearts, and how overwhelmed will they be with shame and Self-condemnation and indelible disgrace before Angels and Saints, when exhibited at the Bar of DIVINE Justice in the garb and colours of Hypocrisy, so chosen when on Earth! That occasional fasting is salutary to the Soul, as it elevates it above the desires and cravings of the Body, in which rank of preference it should unflinching be placed, is unquestionably true; and will be found so, if the Injunction and Example of The Blessed JESUS be thus followed. Nor may the effect be Spiritually beneficial only, for occasional abstinence from full or indulging meals may contribute materially to our bodily health, by starving the peccant humours that otherwise might generate in the body. One instance of exemplary abstinence presents itself to us in the mode adopted by a high Spiritual Character, that of the Prophet *Daniel, who, whilst mourning three full weeks, after receiving a Revelation from The LORD, ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in his mouth.*—Chap. x. 2, 3. But what we deny ourselves, it may be well pleasing in the Sight of GOD for us to give to them that have need; for otherwise He may Say unto us, as He did to the vain boasting Israelites, who fasted but *for strife and debate, Is it such a fast, that I have Chosen? a day for a Man to afflict his Soul? Is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Will thou call this a fast, and an Acceptable Day to The LORD? Is not this the fast that I have Chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the Oppressed go free: and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the Hungry; and that thou bring the Poor, that are cast out, to thy House? when thou seest the Naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own Flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning; and thine health shall spring forth speedily; and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the Glory of The LORD shall be thy Rereward. Then shalt thou call, and The LORD shall Answer: thou shalt cry; and He shall say, "Here I am." If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity; and if thou draw out thy Soul to the Hungry, and satisfy the afflicted Soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday; and The LORD shall Guide thee continually, and Satisfy thy Soul in drougt, and Make fat thy bones; and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.*—Isa. lviii, 4 to 11. If we fast, but not in the Spirit of piety and charity, the same Judgment will sooner or later Overtake us, Which was thus Denounced against such hypocrisy in the Jews: *When this People fast, (Saith The LORD,) I will not Hear their cry; and when they offer burnt-offering and an oblation, I will not Accept them; but I will Consume them by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence.*—Jer. xiv, 12.

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon Earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where Thieves break through and steal! but lay up for yourselves Treasures in Heaven, Where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where Thieves do not break through nor steal! For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.—19 to 21.

The riches of this World make themselves wings and flee away; if not from our grasp in this Life, at least in the instant of our quitting the Life that is, and having to enter an unknown World, where they cannot follow, but where the use or abuse of them here, will influence our Everlasting Destiny; and thus, in the hour of Death, they are worse than useless, if we have not here made friends of them by a righteous and pious employment of them. Should we, however, have wisely used the talent thus Committed to our care for our own and Others good, then will they contribute to produce unto us Those Treasures, Which will, beyond conception, Enrich us in the Life beyond the grave; where to be without Treasure is to be poor, and miserable and naked and destitute indeed, and for ever; but where to possess Treasure, is to partake of the Heavenly Inheritance, and to be Blest Everlastingly with Perfect Peace and Ineffable Joy from the Inexhaustible Stores of DIVINE Love. Let us, therefore, set our affections not on Earth, or Earthly Things unsanctified by The SPIRIT of Grace, but on Things Above, and the Riches of GOD'S Mercy and Good-Will through CHRIST, Which will abundantly Satisfy us even in the Life that is, by the hope They hold out, of the Inestimable Prize of our Calling of GOD in CHRIST JESUS being unfailingly ours in the Life to Come, on the condition of that Faith and the Fruits that ripen on it! Should Earthly wealth be Visited upon us, let us strive to employ it, as considering it a Trust immediately Imparted from GOD, The GIVER of all Good Things, and accounting ourselves as His Stewards thereof, and as if we were day by day to bring such our Stewardship under His View and Sanction; remembering, also, that the Day assuredly will come, when, before the Throne of GOD, and in the Assembly of all the Host of Heaven, that account must practically be rendered, and that our Everlasting Destiny must be influenced by its result! To ourselves, as our circumstances may warrant, may we apply the Apostolic admonition: *Let, them, that are rich in this World, not be high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in The Living GOD, Who Giveth us Richly all Things to enjoy! let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the Time to come; that they may lay hold on Eternal Life!*—1 Tim. vi, 17 to 19. From the like goodly Source of Instruction under DIVINE Guidance, may our conversation and our conduct be without covetousness, and may we be content with such things as we have, not forgetting to do good and to communicate as we have opportunity, assured that, though to such sacrifices GOD is Richly Intitled, He is with them *Well Pleased*.—Heb. xiii, 5. 16. But should these Encouragements fail of influencing the hearts of Any of us, or of those of our Fellow-Mortals with whom we may have intercourse, and to whom we may be enabled to speak the Truth, as It is in JESUS, in season, let the Threatenings of DIVINE Vengeance on the unrighteous and uncharitable employment of Worldly-wealth be had recourse to in the spirit of this language of St. James: *Go to now, ye Rich, (in Worldly treasures, and indulging in sensual pleasures,) weep and howl for your miseries, that shall come upon you! Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten; your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you; and shall eat your flesh, as it were fire! Ye have heaped treasure together for the Last Days! and what good shall they then do you? Ye have lived in pleasure on the Earth, and been wanton! and how shall this fit you for the Holiness of HEAVEN?* [Chap. v, 1, 2, 3. 5.] The wise Son of Sirach gives the right counsel in this




respect, *Lay up thy treasure according to the Commandments of The MOST HIGH! and it shall bring thee more profit than gold. Shut up alms in thy store-houses! and it shall deliver thee from all affliction; it shall fight for thee against thine Enemies, better than a mighty shield and strong spear.*—Ecclus. xxix, 11 to 13. But do this in all Christian humility and devoutness.

St. Luke's narrative of our SAVIOUR'S Doctrine, in the spirit at least of the Text, is thus: *Sell that ye have, and give alms! provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a Treasure in the Heavens, that faileth not, where no Thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth: for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*—Chap. xii, 33, 34.

△ The light of the Body is the eye: if, therefore, thine eye be single, thy whole Body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole Body shall be full of darkness. If, therefore, the light that is in thee, be darkness, how great is that darkness!—22, 23.

The structure of the eye is in itself, when accurately and minutely investigated, sufficient to convert almost an Atheist to the acknowledgment of A Gracious, An All-Wise, an Almighty CREATOR: and the intimate connection and intercourse between the mind and the organ of vision is far more deservedly the subject of wonder and admiration. A mirror has an object presented to it, which it reflects faithfully, but there is no capacity of consciousness to know what that object is, or even that such object is before it. With Animal Nature, and with Man in a pre-eminent degree, thanks to The All-Wise DISPOSER and FRAMER of All, it is otherwise: we not only receive objects in our material organs of sight and reflection, but the Mind has, in the same instant, transferred the character and qualities of those objects; and from hence we derive a very considerable portion of our sublunary benefits and enjoyments. That Faculties, so Graciously and Benevolently Imparted to us, should be otherwise used than in reverence and love for The GIVER, and in subserviency to His Will and Glory, by rendering every Natural object presented to us, an evidence and earnest of an All-Designing Mind in The UNIVERSAL ARTIST, must be the occasion of deep surprise and regret to Celestial Spirits, and will be matter of Self-reproach, when the veil of Human folly is taken from all eyes in the Land of Spirits. If the eye be single, that is, if the intellectual vision be not perverted to double and sinister and unprincipled purposes, but directed to regard only the line of our duty to GOD, our Neighbour, and ourselves, then would, in the sense of the Text, our whole Body be full of That Light, Which Cometh down from The FATHER of Lights, and Which Lighteth Every One, that, in the Spirit of Regeneration through faith in CHRIST, rejoiceth in That Light. To employ the Gracious Gift of sight in gazing on and gratifying the lusts of the flesh, and in pursuit of the Objects which form the pride of a worldly Life, is to cloud the Immortal Part of us in darkness and maze and confusion; till That DIVINE Light shall Break forth and Shine, as for a moment in intolerable Brightness, to Shew the way to an interminable gloom, which shall be felt in all the unutterable horrors of Hell.

St. Luke's version of the Text is thus: *JESUS Said, The light of the Body is the eye; therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole Body also is full of light; but when thine eye is evil, thy Body also is full of darkness: take heed, therefore, that the light, which is in thee, be not darkness! If thy whole Body, therefore, be full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light.*—Chap. xi, 34 to 36.

No Man can serve two Masters; for either he will hate the One, and love the Other; or else he will hold to the One, and despise the Other. Ye cannot serve GOD and Mammon.—24. 

As the eye can receive but one representation of all the objects within its focus at once, so should the eye of the heart and affections be single, and not attempt to embrace more within its reach: and if that single object be, as it ought to be, The GOD, Who Made us, and Who is Himself The FOUNTAIN of Intellectual Light, to Which all Its Streams and Rays should revert, then, and then only, will the Soul be full of That Heavenly Light, the Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT; and all will then be beauty and order and harmony and consolation and blissful hope within. But if we think to grasp the double object of this World in our affections and desires, we shall fearfully fail, and by persevering in the attempt, shall let go the enduring substance of Heavenly Peace in all its purity and animating glow within the heart, exchanging it for the vain and fleeting and unsatisfying treasures of Earth: the final privation of which at death will be succeeded by the shadow and despair-creating gloom of unfathomable Darkness and unending Woe! The love of this World so blindeth the eyes of its Votaries, and renders them so neglectful of the duties that have relation to the World to Come, that we cannot, with equal zeal, serve two Masters with a character and qualities so entirely different: the very nature of the service we should render to the One, altogether unfitting and disqualifying us for the obligations we should be under to please the Other. They, who love the World in its fond infatuating sense, and thereby become by adoption and choice its Servants, must be at variance with The DIVINE Commandments, and, consequently, set at nought and be at enmity with their Heavenly MASTER'S Rules, giving all the homage, that is due to Him, unto Another. *If I pleased Men,* (said St. Paul,) *I should not be the Servant of CHRIST.*—Gal. i, 10. The same sentiment, though more enlarged upon, did the Apostle James utter, when addressing himself to Those, who were neglectful of their Soul's betrothed vows to CHRIST, he said, *Ye Adulterers and Adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the World is enmity with GOD? Whoso will be a Friend of the World is the Enemy of GOD!* and he then admonishes, *Submit yourselves to GOD; Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you: Draw nigh to GOD, and He will Draw Nigh to you!* remembering that *HE is The Only Law-Giver, Who is Able to Save, and to Destroy.*—James iv, 4. 7. 8. 12.

St. John, who His LORD so pre-eminently Loved, thus, in the Spirit of That MASTER'S Doctrine, admonishes, *Love not the World, neither the Things that are in the World! If any Man love the World, the love of The FATHER is not in him: for all that is in the World, the lust of the Flesh, and the lust of the Eyes, and the pride of Life, is not of The FATHER, but is of the World. And the World passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he, that doth the Will of GOD, abideth for ever:* [1 John ii, 15 to 17.] and again, the same Apostle, in the iii chapter of the same Epistle, writes, *Behold, what Manner of Love The FATHER hath Bestowed upon us, that we should be Called "The Sons of GOD!" Therefore the World knoweth us not, because it knew Him not.* But in his affectionate strain of address to every true Servant of CHRIST, he adds, *Beloved, now are we the Sons of GOD; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall Appear, we shall be Like Him; for we shall see Him as He is! And every Man, that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as He is Pure. Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not: Whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him, neither known Him. Whosoever is Born of GOD doth not commit sin; for His Seed Remaineth in him; and he cannot sin because he is Born of GOD. In this the Children of GOD are manifest, and the Children of the Devil: Whosoever*

doeth not Righteousness is not of GOD; neither he, that loveth not his Brother. Marvel not, my Brethren, if the World hate you! We know that we have passed from Death unto Life, because we love the Brethren: [1 John iii, 1. 3. 6. 9. 10. 13. 14.] and an after passage, which the same Apostle wrote, characterizes but too justly the World, and points to the evidence of the Christians' triumph over it: *Whosoever is Born of GOD overcometh the World; and we know that the whole World lieth in wickedness.*—1 John v, 4. 19.

St. Luke's version of the Text is in the same words precisely, except substituting *Servant* for *Man*. [Chap. xvi, 13.] St Paul, resolving all his acts to the Guidance and Grace of GOD, when writing to the Galatians, and wishing to influence them to the same spirit of submission and unmeasured deference and devotedness to The ALMIGHTY'S Will, and with the desire only to promote His Glory, said, *Do I now persuade Men, or does GOD? or do I seek to please Men? For if I yet pleased Men, I should not be the Servant of CHRIST.*—Chap. i, 10.

△ Therefore I Say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your Body, what ye shall put on! Is not the Life more than meat, and the Body than raiment?—25.


This Injunction, liberally and not literally construed, is laid against an inordinate desire or direction of the mind towards the things of this Life as the chief good; and was not meant to exclude such an attention to them in a secondary sense and consideration as may be necessary to preserve life, and keep from being burdensome on Others. The example of St. Paul is a confirmation of the propriety of this construction, who *laboured night and day because he would not be chargeable on Others*: [1 Thess. ii, 9.] *his own hands ministering unto his necessities, and to them, that were with him.*—Acts. xx, 34; 1 Cor. iv, 12; 2 Thess. iii, 8. To provide things honest in the sight of all Men is our duty: but the fault lies in labouring only or principally for the meat that perisheth; and in an uncharitable or unholy appropriation of that superabundant provision, which either with or without labour may fall to our lot. And when the certainty of death and the uncertainty of its arrival are reflected on, it must strike every rightly-thinking mind with astonishment that Beings, whose existence here is so very contracted, even at its utmost limit, and so precarious, that any moment may determine it; and whose continuance in the Life that succeeds, will be everlasting, should so exclusively labour, as unhappily too Many do, for that which satisfieth not even here, and which will inevitably call down that Sentence of Exclusion from the Riches of the Mercies of GOD, and of Condemnation to that Poverty and inconceivable Wretchedness, which await the Displeasure of The ALMIGHTY in the Day of Final Retribution. After the admonition of the Royal Psalmist, may we, in meekness and soberness and truth, *cast our burden upon The LORD*, in the confidence that *He will Sustain us* here, or, what should be infinitely preferable for us, Take us to Himself: [Ps. lv, 22.] a sentiment that was thus devoutly echoed by the Apostle Peter, *Cast all your care upon GOD; for He Careth for you!*—1 Peter v, 7. In like terms flowed ~~in such~~ <sup>rich</sup> admonitory strain from the later Apostle Paul, *Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto GOD!* [Phil. iv, 6.] and after the same Apostle's own great example, *learn, in whatsoever state we are, therewith to be content; knowing both how to be abased, and how to abound: every where and in all things being instructed both to be full and to be hungry; assured that our GOD will Supply all our Spiritual need, according to His Riches in Glory by CHRIST JESUS.*—Phil. iv, 11, 12. 19.

St. Luke's version of the Text is thus: *And CHRIST Said unto His Disciples, "Therefore I Say unto you, Take no thought for your Life, what ye shall eat, neither for the Body, what ye shall put on: the Life is more than meat, and the Body is more than raiment."*—Chap. xii, 22, 23.

Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns! yet your HEAVENLY FATHER Feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? —26.

The Vast and Wondrous and Universal Providence of GOD, Exemplified equally in the Preservation as in the Creation of both animal and vegetable being, is every where and at all times before us, to convince us that He, Who Careth for all the Works of His Hands, and Supplieth the wants and Administers to the comfort of the birds around us, (whether they be conscious of His Existence or not,) doth, in a more Especial Manner Care for, and is as Willing as Able to Feed and Nourish and Cherish Mankind (so much nearer to Him in the scale of Being,) with the Bread of Life Eternal, if we, to whom He has Vouchsafed Peculiarly to Reveal Himself in all the Endearing Relationships of CREATOR and BENEFactor, REDEEMER and SANCTIFIER, will but give Him thanks and seek His Everlasting Love by faithfully fulfilling His Will. May we, therefore, serve Him and obey Him, as we ought to do, putting our whole trust and confidence in Him, considering Who it is That Provideth for Each of us, as well as for the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fishes of the waters. *It is GOD, That Giveth to the Beast his food, and to the young Ravens, which cry.*—Ps. cxlvii, 9; Job xxxviii, 41.

St. Luke's relation of this part of our SAVIOUR'S Discourse is thus: *Consider the ravens; for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn: and GOD Feedeth them! how much more are ye better than the fowls!*—Chap. xii, 24. How Beautiful the Thought; How Forcible the Reasoning! How strong is the confidence, to which They Encouragingly Invite us!

Which of you, by taking thought, can add one cubit unto his stature?—27. 

This is a most forcible call to the reason of Man to admit, by an acknowledgment of his own littleness and impotency, the Greatness and the Power, the Dominion and the Goodness, the Forbearance and the Mercy of The LORD of the Universe, The MAKER of all Things in Heaven and in Earth; and to depend upon His Wisdom, and to trust in His Providence and Grace, and to hope in His Benevolence, through faith in His SON'S Mediation.

And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not; neither do they spin: and yet I Say unto you, That even Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if GOD so Clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more Clothe you, O ye of little faith?—28 to 30.

After inviting our attention to our utter incapacity to elevate the structure of our bodies beyond the natural height, CHRIST Extends His Gracious Counsel to Deter us from giving too much of time or thought to the decorations or peculiarities of our dress; Urging us to rely for a supply of such accommodation in this respect, as we may need, and may be fitting our station or circumstances in life, to The SOURCE, Whence every Good Gift Cometh, and employing, as far as may be proper, our own industry in the work. Directing our thoughts in the most interesting and affecting manner to that exquisitely beautiful object in the vegetable Kingdom, which amidst all the charms and attractions of its form and

colouring, neither toiled nor spun to acquire them, but received them as the Free Gift of The GIVER of all, even of Him, The Universal CREATOR, Who Offereth unto the Faithful the Robe of Righteousness and the Garment of Salvation, a Clothing, which is as incomparably more comforting and adorning than all the Royal attire of Solomon; as the Things of Eternity surpass in excellency, and should, with All of us, surpass in interest, the things of Time.

That GOD should not only Create so many Things for our use, but should, in their composition, Mix so much of beauty and utility, not only thereby sustaining us in our passage through a Life so short, until we reach the Blissful Regions of Celestial Paradise, but thereby also Gladdening and Solacing and Cheering in that briefly ending path, the various bodily senses with which He has Richly Endowed our frames, and *that* in a manner to excite admiration and impart delight, should awaken in us a habit of grateful adoration and reverential love, inducing in us a caution not to abuse them, or to partake of them without a consciousness from Whence they Graciously Sprung. By such a regulation and application of our thoughts respecting them, the enjoyment of these Works of GOD is inconceivably heightened, and the heart is gladdened by its own gratitude, and thus, through an associated and lively faith in CHRIST, we may cherish also the Soul-sustaining hope that we may eventually participate in the admiration of all the Loveliness and Attractions of The DEITY Himself, when, Robed in Mercy as in Glory, He shall be Visibly Manifested to all His Saints, and they feed Thereon extatically through all Eternity. Let us, therefore, strive to have faith in the Power and Providence of GOD, and though at first it may seem to be but small as a grain of mustard seed, yet through the Fostering and Nourishing Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT, it will grow up into a plant lovelier than the lily of chief beauty, and become, eventually, a Tree of Wisdom and Knowledge and Enduring Life through all Eternity.

St. Luke's Version of this and the preceding Text is thus: *JESUS Said unto His Disciples, "And which of you, with taking thought, can add to his stature one cubit? If ye then be not able to do that thing, which is least, why take ye thought for the rest? Consider the lilies, how they grow! they toil not, they spin not; and yet I Say unto you, That Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If then GOD so Clothe the grass, which is to-day in the field, and to-morrow is cast into the oven; how much more will He Clothe you, O ye of little faith!"*—Chap. xii, 25 to 28.

Therefore take no thought, saying, "What shall we eat?" or "What shall we drink?" or "Wherewithal shall we be clothed?" (for after all these things do the Gentiles seek;) for your HEAVENLY FATHER Knoweth that ye have need of all these things.—31, 32.


Give not those earnest and anxious thoughts, which it behoves every One to entertain of Spiritual and Eternal Concerns, unto those things which are finite, and which any succeeding moment to the one, we may be here existing in, may deprive us of, or of the means of using. Let us not be careful and troubled about many things, but bear in mind that there is *one Thing*, above all others, and which alone is truly *needful*, even the Salvation of our Immortal Souls; and may we act upon that impression, by *choosing that good part, which shall not be Taken away from us*.—Luke x, 41, 42. Let us, with the holy Psalmist, *desire one thing of The LORD, and that let us sedulously seek after, that we may dwell in the House of The LORD all the days of our Lives, to behold the Beauty of The LORD, and to inquire in His Temple*.—Ps. xxvii, 4.

St. Luke thus gives his view or report of the Text, Our SAVIOUR Continuing His Discourse, Said, *And seek not ye, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall*

*drink; neither be ye of doubtful mind! for all these things do the Nations of the World seek after: and your FATHER Knoweth that ye have need of these things.*—Chap. xii, 29, 30. *Be not of doubtful mind!* that is, halt not between two opinions! but as GOD, and not the World, should be your LORD and MASTER, worship and serve Him!

But seek ye first The KINGDOM of GOD, and His Righteousness! and all these things shall be Added unto you!—33.

How Gracious and Comforting is This Assurance of The Blessed JESUS, that, in heartily seeking what is most estimable and durable, we go the way to find not only that Jewel, which is above all price, but to have added to it in abundance all the desirable gems of lesser value. To seek the KINGDOM of HEAVEN by faith in the Merits of CHRIST, and, through the Sanctifying Gift of the Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT, in Righteousness and true Holiness, is the paramount duty, which every Man owes to himself; and all other objects comparatively are utterly unworthy of his devoted attention, otherwise than subversively to that end and aim. And if that be pursued with singleness and solicitude of heart, it will assuredly be found, and all other wants will thereby be virtually satisfied. For in the Abundance of His Goodness and Mercy GOD *Giveth us more than we deserve or desire, even that, which we have not asked.*—1 Kings iii, 13. If we follow after Righteousness, without wavering, the observation made by King David, after much acquaintance with Human life in all its varieties, might be realized in us: *I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the Righteous Forsaken, nor his Seed begging bread:* [Ps. xxxvii, 25.] and we have St. Paul's confirmatory assurance to the Pious, that *Godliness is profitable unto all things, having Promise of the Life that now is, and of That which is to Come.*—1 Tim. iv, 8. St. Luke's version of the Text exactly accords with it: *But rather seek ye The KINGDOM of GOD! and all these things shall be Added unto you.*—Chap. xii, 31.

Take, therefore, no thought for the morrow! for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.—34. 

To seek for a reasonable and competent provision for ourselves and Dependants is quite enough of abstraction from the duties and the delights of Heavenly contemplation; and considering the precariousness of the tenure, by which we hold the present Life, and the Nature and Continuance of That, to which it is but a passage, it is surprising that any Individual can be found, on whom the Light of The Gospel of Truth hath but even dawned, who can value the perishing things and fleeting pleasures of this Life more than the enduring Riches and Perfect Bliss of the Proffered Inheritance in the KINGDOM of HEAVEN. To the Soul of truly devotional feeling and of Christian Spirit, sufficient for the day is any provision it may bring; and the evil of it predominates over the good, if it be only in withholding from us, even for its short season, the participation in That Peace, which passeth understanding, and That Joy, which fadeth not away. Let us, therefore, according to the proper understanding and personal application of this general Admonition, study to be content with that which we have, avoiding (as we should value our everlasting interest,) so clogging to-day or the present time with worldly pursuits for the sake of to-morrow or the future time, as to shut out all season for searching after Godliness in to-day, lest to-morrow, when it come, should find us deprived by death, or disabled by sickness, of the power to seek it. Let us bear in mind St. James's pertinent remonstrance: *Go to now, ye that say, "To-day or to-morrow we will go*

*into such a City, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain:” whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow: for what is your Life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanishes away: for that ye ought to say, “If The LORD Will, we shall live, and do this or that.”—Chap. iv, 13 to 15.*

CHAP. vii.—Judge not! that ye be not Judged.—1.

How Just and Gracious is this Admonition, and yet how almost universally disregarded! For All seem ever ready to pass judgment and but too often hasty censures on the actions of Others, even assuming to interpret their motives. But surely, if they would reflect that thus to judge, perhaps falsely, and at least uncharitably, is *virtually* to invoke Judgment on themselves from The Omniscient and Omnipotent JUDGE of All; and to challenge Him to Follow their example in Excluding all Mixture of Mercy in That Judgment, they would practise forbearance from the dictate of Self-interest alone, and not so unwisely commit their everlasting State, as thus wantonly to risk it. To St. Paul we may look for an admirable comment on the spirit of this Text: *Thou art inexcusable, O Man, whosoever thou art, that judgest; for wherein thou judgest Another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou, that judgest, doest the same things. But we are sure that the Judgment of GOD is according to Truth against them, which commit such things. And thinkest thou this, O Man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the Judgment of GOD?* [Rom. ii, 1 to 3.] and again, *Who art thou, that judgest another Man's Servant? To his own Master he standeth or falleth. But why dost thou judge thy Brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy Brother? For we shall All stand before the Judgment Seat of CHRIST.*—Rom. xiv, 4. 10. To him, who stands, as it were, continually before the Judgment Seat of GOD, as acting under the unvarying impression of His Immediate Observation, *it is a very small thing to be judged of Man's judgment: for as the same Apostle reiterates, HE, That Judgeth us, is The LORD! therefore* (adds he,) *let us judge nothing before the time, until The LORD Come, Who both will Bring to Light the hidden things of Darkness, and will Make Manifest the counsels of the hearts.*—1 Cor. iv, 3 to 5. In the same spirit of exhortatory counsel the Apostle James writes: *Speak not evil One of Another! for he, that speaketh evil of his Brother, and judgeth his Brother, speaketh evil of the Law, and judgeth the Law: but if thou judge the Law, thou art not a Doer of the Law, but a Judge: whereas there is but One LAW-GIVER, Who is Able to Save and to Destroy. Who, therefore, art thou, that judgest Another?*—Chap. iv, 11, 12. St. Luke offers rather an enlarged view of the Text: *Judge not! and ye shall not be Judged: Condemn not! and ye shall not be Condemned: Forgive! and ye shall be Forgiven.*—Chap. vi, 37.

For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be Judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be Measured to you again.—2.

If, however, we are led by duty or other justifiable occasion to pass judgment upon our Neighbour, let us from hence be impressed with the importance, to our own Spiritual interest, of regulating that judgment by the rules of soberness and truth, of integrity and candour; as otherwise, when the Last Judgment is Passed upon us, from Which there is no appeal, and on Which our Everlasting Destiny will depend, we find, rising in accusation against us to influence to our endless misery and Self-condemnation, the unwarrantably severe and harsh and cruel judgments, with which in the Life, then irreclaimably past, we may have visited the conduct of our Fellow-mortals. St. Luke's impression of this part of the Address of our SAVIOUR is thus: *Give! and it shall be given unto you;*

*good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall Men give into your bosom: for with the same measure, that ye mete withal, it shall be measured to you again.—Chap. vi, 38.*

And why beholdest thou the mote, that is in thy Brother's eye; but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy Brother, "Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye!" and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou Hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye! and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy Brother's eye.—3 to 5.

Strange that Man, the noblest Work of Creation, should be the only One to pervert the order and disturb the harmony of Nature; and still more strange that he, a reflecting Being, should do this, when, as the effect of just reflection, he is thereby destroying his best means of happiness here, and putting in awful jeopardy his title to DIVINE Regard and Favour, Which are the Perfection of Bliss in the possible experience of Man through the Eternity of the Hereafter! To the acquirement of that knowledge, unto which we should rivet our attention, and which the deepest penetration is necessary for us thoroughly to master—the knowledge of Ourselves, we seem comparatively indifferent; whilst with a busy, meddling, and officious perseverance we are continually prying into the conduct of our Neighbours, exposing their foibles, and magnifying them into faults, and, when faults they really have, challenging the Public execration of them without measure and without mercy, exciting a spirit of rancorous hostility against their Persons, instead of confining the reproach to the acts committed; and seeking, in Christian Charity, to reclaim a Fellow-Creature, an Immortal Spirit from the otherwise fatal error of his ways. And this, too, when possessing in ourselves, though perhaps in a different direction, yet in equal if not greater degree, faults and evil propensities, which if we did not forcibly shut out our thoughts from them, would prompt us to be lenient and forbearant towards the frailties of Others. As the influence of example is great, so is the responsibility of it great also; and for One to assume to lash the vices of Others, when guilty of them himself, is to put on the mask either of hateful hypocrisy, or of fearful Self-deception: it is to make a mockery of Righteousness and Purity, and to cause them to be evil-spoken of; and thus, possibly, to influence from Generation to Generation either to the daring and open and avowed commission of iniquity, or to that secret practice of it, which the thin and flimsy veil of hypocrisy may, for a time, conceal from general knowledge or observation, but which assuredly shall one day be made manifest before Men and Angels; and shall then be the more heart-rending and confounding, owing to its demoralizing influence over Others. Let us not, therefore, be unmindful of the Mercy we need from That GOD, to Whom Judgment Belongs, as to judge hastily or harshly of Others, without a previous and close examination of our own hearts, and a Self-inquiry whether, if exposed to equal temptation, we might not, in like manner, have fallen into error; and then as we have to deal with A GOD, Who, though Offended every day, yet Delighteth in Mercy, we shall study to be tender-hearted and compassionate, delighting to reclaim and not to condemn our Fellows.

St. Luke's version is in perfect agreement with the Text: *Why beholdest thou the mote, that is in thy Brother's eye; but perceivest not the beam, that is in thine own eye? Either how canst thou say to thy Brother, "Brother, let me pull out the mote, that is in thine eye!" when thou thyself beholdest not the beam, that is in thine own eye? Thou Hypocrite! cast out first the beam out of thine own eye! and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy Brother's eye.—Chap. vi, 41, 42.*



△ Give not that which is holy unto the dogs! neither cast ye your pearls before swine! lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.—6.

This term of dogs is, unfortunately, a state of diabolical depravity, which the heart of Man acquires from a total defiance of GOD, and contempt of Holy Things, from having entirely quenched, by blasphemy and rebellion and all the lusts of the Flesh, the Operations of The HOLY SPIRIT, within the Soul; whence all hope of Reclaiming it is dead, since all the Strivings of That SPIRIT by the Benign Influence of Its Grace, to Bring the wandering Sinner within the Pale of Salvation, through the Mercies of The FATHER and the Merits of The SON, have been rejected, and, therefore, been in vain. The transgressions of such a Soul against both GOD and Man, being without ceasing and without compunction, it becomes, like Elymas the Sorcerer, an Enemy to all Righteousness, and a Child of the Devil, and to reclaim it the labour of Christian Love is in vain; and the Bread of Eternal Life and the Cup of Salvation, yielding no relish, are discarded with disgust, and treated with outrage or scorn. To offer them, therefore, would not only be unprofitable, but improper; it would only multiply our sorrows at witnessing the accumulating offences, and consequent hopeless state of One, who might with us have been an Heir of Immortality in Glory. In such a cast of character we can only justifiably have recourse to prayer, and supplicate The FOUNTAIN of MERCY to Send Its Streams unto such a Soul, and cleanse and convert and purify its heart, under a confidence that what may not seem possible in us, is Possible with GOD; pointing to the Bleeding Sacrifice of CHRIST, in Propitiation for the sins of the whole World, wherever, or whenever repented of. It was amongst the many wise utterings of the peaceful King of Israel, that *he, who reproveth a Scornor, getteth to himself shame; and he, that rebuketh a wicked Man, getteth to himself a blot*: [Prov. ix, 7.] and again, *Speak not in the ears of a Fool! for he will despise the wisdom of thy words*.—Prov. xxiii, 9.


**Ask!** and it shall be Given you: **Seek!** and ye shall find: **Knock!** and it shall be Opened unto you. For Every One that asketh, Receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be Opened.—7, 8.

How cheering to the Soul of the Christian Pilgrim is this Ray of DIVINE Light Beaming on him from The SUN of RIGHTEOUSNESS! How transporting with joy is This Gracious Assurance of Him, Who is the Way and the Truth and the Life! That it is only to ask in Faith and in a spirit of meek submission for the Efficacy of DIVINE Grace, and the Fulfilment of the hope of Glory; and from Him, Who is The GIVER of every Good and Perfect Gift, they will be Received into the Soul. It is only to knock in reverence at the Door of His Dwelling, Who hath Opened the Gate of HEAVEN to all Believers; and an entrance is gained to the Abodes of the Blest. It is only patiently and perseveringly to seek of Him, Whose is the KINGDOM and the Power and the Glory, even JESUS CHRIST, The LORD of Glory; and the otherwise irreparably lost Title to an Inheritance in the Heavens, Incorruptible, and Which fadeth not away, is recovered. And The Same DIVINE Counsellor hath Said, as we shall onward find, *All things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive*: [Matt. xxi, 22.] and, as recorded by another Evangelist, *Men ought always to pray, and not to faint*: [Luke xviii, 1.] Superadding to His Counsel the Promise of His Effectual Intercession, Saying, *Whatsoever ye shall ask in My Name, That will I Do; that The FATHER may be Glorified in The SON*: [John xiv, 13.] again, *If ye Abide in Me, and My Words Abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be Done unto you*.—John xv, 7. *Ask! and ye shall Receive; that your joy may be full*.—John xvi, 24. *If Any of you lack wisdom, saith the*

Apostle James, (and meaning that wisdom, of which the fear of GOD is the beginning,) *let him ask of GOD, That Giveth to all Men Liberally; and Upbraideth not; and it shall be Given him! but let him ask in faith; nothing wavering; for he, that wavereth, is like a wave of the Sea driven with the wind and tossed: for let not that Man think, that he shall receive any thing of The LORD: a double-minded Man is unstable in all his ways.*—Chap. i, 5 to 8. To recur to the peculiarly Beloved and Gifted Apostle of our SAVIOUR, St. John: *If our heart (he writes,) condemn us not, then have we confidence toward GOD; and whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His Commandments; and do those things, that are Pleasing in His Sight: [1 John iii, 21, 22.] and again, This is the confidence, that we have in The SON of GOD, that, if we ask any thing according to His Will, He Heareth us; and if we know that He Hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him.*—1 John v, 14, 15.

*Those, that seek Me early, shall find Me,* Said The FOUNTAIN of Wisdom by the mouth of the Wisest of His Creatures upon Earth. [Prov. viii, 17.] And it was The Same Prompting SPIRIT, That Made the Prophet Jeremiah declare, when addressing the then penitent Children of Israel amidst their sorrows and their sufferings under the Babylonish captivity, in the Language and as the Oracle of JEHOVAH, *Thus Saith The LORD, "I Know the Thoughts, That I Think toward you; Thoughts of Peace, and not of evil, to Give you an expected end (to your captivity.) Then shall ye call upon Me; and ye shall go and pray unto Me; and I will Hearken unto you: and ye shall seek Me, and find Me; when ye shall search for Me with all your heart; and I will be Found of you," Saith The LORD.*—Chap. xxix, 10 to 14. And the Same in Spirit Saith The Same LORD unto All, who groan under Spiritual bondage; and in penitence and faith seek of Him to Set them free for CHRIST'S Sake.


St. Luke's version is in the exact wording of the Text.—Chap. xi, 9, 10.

Or what Man is there of you, whom, if his Son ask bread, will he give him a stone? or if he ask fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your Children, how much more shall your FATHER, Which is in Heaven, Give Good Things to them, that ask him.—9 to 11. 

If Man, who derives all his faculties from his MAKER, employ but his understanding to discern between good and evil, and exercise his heart in choosing the good, and avoiding the evil, he exemplifies that Attribute of The DEITY, Which, Foreknowing our Spiritual necessities, and Intending us the most enduring Blessings, Gives or Withholds as Seemeth Him Best for our Eternal Interest. Even in the objects of our most earnest prayer, if He Knows the obtaining them might vitally affect our Spiritual state, He Withholds His Hand. The narrative by St. Luke, which is nearly in the words of the Text, is thus: *If a Son shall ask bread of any of you, that is a Father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your Children, how much more shall your HEAVENLY FATHER Give The HOLY SPIRIT to them, that ask Him!*—Chap. xi, 11 to 13. And truly Unmeasured comprehensiveness of Good exists in the Grace Imparted by The SPIRIT: the Peace It yields, the Joy It Infuses through The DIVINE Light It Sheds upon the Soul, and the Assurance It Gives of Sanctification unto Election through CHRIST, Leave all the fond and pleasure-seeking pursuits in this Life, in comparison, as dust in the balance. That Precious Gift is the first fruit of Faith, and Its Efficacy is manifested by the renewing of the heart in all holiness and righteousness; and is consummated in Life and Glory Everlasting.—Rom. vi, 23.

*Being evil.* That we are by Nature prone to evil, and the Children of disobedience—that the imagination of Man's heart is evil from his youth—is evident to every One's consciousness, who will look calmly and reflectively inward upon himself, or seriously upon the World, and see how much evil prevails: and that only is it effectually Controuled by the Operation of The DIVINE Grace, Which, through CHRIST'S Atoning and Reconciling Sacrifice, is freely Offered unto All. And though the first impression of that evil upon our Nature is ascribable to the transgression of our first Parents, yet by individually suffering its continuance and prevalence there, and rejecting that Supply of Grace, which would Purify the heart and Cleanse it from all its defilements, we expose ourselves to the Just Anger of The ALMIGHTY, Who cannot Bear with iniquity. On the existence of evil in our Nature, which is called original sin, and on the Efficacy of DIVINE Grace, through the Merits and Mediation of CHRIST, in eradicating it, or robbing it of its sting, we cannot do better than consult with the closest attention, and, at the same time, with the profoundest humility, the whole of those most learned and just exemplifications of it by St. Paul, in the 7th and 8th chapters of his Epistle to the Romans, and more particularly the parts here extracted, whence we may gather the following principles of the Doctrine—that all Mankind are in their unregenerated and fallen Nature sinful: that there is a Law either of express Revelation, or operating through the conscience on the heart and understanding, Commanding and Encouraging us not to sin; that such Law, Emanating from The ALMIGHTY, All are bound to obey; and if they do not, then does sin become exceedingly and accumulatively sinful, involving the jeopardy of a Sentence to interminable Banishment from the Sanctities of HEAVEN: that the condition of Man here is a state of continual warfare between the sin he is impelled to by his Nature or natural affections, and the resistance to it excited and sustained in him by the Aid of The SPIRIT; for, lest the power of Nature should be entirely predominant over us, The GOD of Nature Offereth us Freely His Grace to Aid us, by the Guidance and Wisdom of His HOLY SPIRIT in the contest, Assuring us, that if we persevere in the conflict unto the end, though we may sometimes be troubled on every side, yet shall we not be distressed beyond measure; though we may be perplexed, yet shall we not be in despair; though persecuted, yet not Forsaken; though cast down, yet not destroyed; but shall finally prevail over all opposition, triumphing under the Banner of CHRIST, The Great CAPTAIN of our Salvation; for if we have Him to Rule over us, GOD will, with Him, Freely Give us all things. [See Rom. viii, 35. 37.] And again, as Saith the Voice of Inspiration by The Same Apostle, *We know that the Law is Spiritual, but that we are carnal, sold under sin*, (by the sale of our first Parents' birthright to Heaven for Forbidden fruit;) *for that which we do, we allow not; but what we would, that do we not; yet what we hate, that do we: if then we do that, which we would not, we consent unto the Law that It is good: thus we find that when we would do good, evil is present with us; and though we may delight in the Law of GOD, after the Inward Man, yet we see another law in our members warring against the law of our minds, and bringing us into captivity to the law of sin, which is in our members.* And wretched indeed should we be if there were no Will, as well as Power from On High to Succour us! But thanks be to GOD, Who, through CHRIST JESUS, Giveth us the Victory.—Rom. vii, 14, &c. *There is now, therefore, no Condemnation to them, which are in CHRIST JESUS, who walk not after the flesh, but after The SPIRIT; for the Law of the Spirit of Life in CHRIST JESUS hath Made them Free from the Law of sin and death; for what the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the Flesh, GOD, Sending His Own SON in the likeness of sinful Flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the*

*flesh; that the Righteousness of the Law might, through Him, be fulfilled in Such as walk not after the flesh, but after The SPIRIT.*—Rom. viii, 1 to 4.

Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that Men should do to you, do ye even so to them! for this is the Law and the Prophets.—12. 

It is impossible for language to convey a more excellent and infallible rule of conduct, so concise yet so comprehensive, for Man to observe towards his Fellow-Creatures than this, which is clear to every capacity and applicable to every One's practice. If we would know how to act towards Others, we have only in imagination to change places with them, and ask ourselves how we would then wish them to act towards us? are we in health, and they in sickness: would we not, if in their state of suffering, wish for alleviation? to have the bed of pain made easier to us? to have the unction of healing poured upon us? the balm of comfort administered to us? Why then do we not do unto them, that are afflicted in body, that for which, if so afflicted, and so needing assistance, we should bless them from our hearts, if they, who were able, had rendered unto us!—Are we in affluence, and they in poverty? should we not, if in their state of penury and want, struggling ineffectually from day to day but for a sufficiency of daily food, having, perhaps, also those around them helpless yet dependant on their exertions, looking with an eye of sadness on their scanty pittance amidst the general dearth, wish for some better fate for us and our little Ones, some less unequal distribution of the common means of sustenance at least?—Are we enlightened by wisdom, and gifted with knowledge; and are they clouded with ignorance, and though almost without reason, yet directing what they have more to evil than to good? Should we not, if so shut out from the essential benefit of the paramount and Characteristic distinction of our Nature over the Brute Creation, pour forth a spirit of thankfulness, lasting as our Lives, if they dispersed that cloud and opened to us the dawn of intellectual and Spiritual day, and spread the cheering rays of science around us by education and reflection? And why then do we not extend our care to so useful and ennobling an employment?—Are we, in our conceptions, Gifted with That Wisdom, Which is from Above, Which is first Pure and then Peaceable? with That Faith, which is in CHRIST JESUS? with That Blessed Hope of Everlasting Life through Him, as The ROCK of our Salvation? and with that subserviency to the Dictates of The HOLY SPIRIT within us? And do we see our Neighbour have need of all these things? how dwelleth truly the love of GOD in us? if we, who should so ardently desire them, could we suppose ourselves without them, do not strive to impart the knowledge of the Means and the Way by which alone such infinite Blessings are procured?

*Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thyself!* was a maxim in the Mosaic Ritual; [Lev. xix, 18.] and to that Law the Prophets bore testimony, and in their Writings exhorted to its observance. And as the Prophets echoed the voice of Moses in this respect, so did the Apostles That of CHRIST: and St. Paul, amongst the prominent, enjoins us to be *Kindly affectioned One to Another with Brotherly love, in honour preferring One Another, letting our love be without dissimulation; being of the same mind One towards Another; rejoicing with them that do rejoice, and weeping with them that weep: for as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office; so we, being many, are one Body in CHRIST; and every One Members One of Another; having Gifts differing according to the Grace, That is Given us.*—Rom. xii, 4 to 16.

St. Luke very much enlarges in this part of his narrative of The SAVIOUR'S inimitable Sermon: *As ye would, that Men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise! for if ye love them, which love you, what thank have you? for Sinners also*

*love those, that love them : and if ye do good to them, which do good to you, what thank have ye? for Sinners also do even the same: and if ye lend to them, of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for Sinners also lend to Sinners, to receive as much again. But love ye your Enemies! and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again: and your Reward shall be Great; and ye shall be the Children of The HIGHEST; for HE is Kind unto the Unthankful and to the Evil! Be ye therefore, merciful, as your FATHER also is Merciful.—Chap. vi, 31 to 36.*

△ Enter ye in at the strait gate! for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction; and Many there be, which go in thereat! Because Strait is the Gate, and Narrow is the Way, Which Leadeth unto Life, and Few there be that find It. 13, 14.

Having previously Exhorted to an observance of duties both towards GOD and Man, The Blessed JESUS here additionally Urges the fulfilment of the duties, by Adverting to the Glorious Object to be obtained by observing them, even Everlasting Life. But, alas, how awful is the Avowal from The SOURCE of Truth that, though All might attain unto It, Few there be that do! The Gate to the Mansions of Life and Blessedness Eternal is strait before us, and narrow is the Way that leadeth to It: if, therefore, our eye be single, and our Heavenly-mindedness illuminate it, the course is obvious, and the end as surely happy. Indeed a continual direction of the attention to that High and Holy Aim will, more than any thing in this Life, spread its paths with peace and joy. May we, therefore, take that narrow but safe Way, and in so striving share through the Merits and Mercies of CHRIST, enter at GOD'S Appointed Season with the Faithful at the Gate, through which, in His Human Nature, He has Passed before, and shall dwell with Him in all His Glory. If we have hitherto strayed from it, let us henceforth walk circumspectly, redeeming the time mispent by our past departure from it: for if we do not, there is but one other gate and one other course, and though the way is broad from the number of wilful, blind, and perverse and wicked and obdurate People, who tread it, yet is it full of thorns and briars, serpents and scorpions, pitfalls and stumbling blocks, darkness and misery, leading inevitably to the everlasting destruction of the Body and Soul; and the gate that opens at its termination, though so wide as to admit All, though, nevertheless, in their road to ruin, opens to endless desolation and despair and famine of the Goodness and the Grace of GOD. Whereas the Gate that at the Bidding of The SON of GOD, Opens to all Believers, Presents at once a Scene of Joy and Peace and Consolation, beaming with light and teeming with beauty, and unspeakably cheered with the Visual Rays of The SUN of Righteousness.


△ Beware of false Prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves!—15.

In the age of Prophecy there were Persons, who from motives of covetousness or from the influence of hypocrisy, being, alas, Children of the Devil, assumed to themselves the gift of divination, and the discerning the Purposes of The MOST HIGH GOD, or foreseeing the workings and windings of the Human heart: the objects of these Persons, thus blasphemously avowing themselves the Ministers of Him, Who Alone Imparteth the Spirit of Prophecy, but Who they were not, being Worldly, sensual, devilish, the tendency of their prediction was to deceive, and to put darkness for light and bitter for sweet, and the doctrines engrafted on them bent to the evil propensities of Man by flattering his weaknesses and fostering his vices. In this our day, though the age of

Prophecy is gone by, yet are there Those, who, assuming to be the only Accredited Ministers of GOD'S Word, and alone to have been Called to that Office by His Especial Grace, through the blinding influence of Spiritual pride and distempered imaginations are their own Deceivers; Men, who put on the outer garment of the Church, as Religion's cloak, only to advance their worldly objects, to gratify their thirst for lucre, or their eagerness for temporal distinction; but who, when those purposes are answered, throw it virtually aside, and unblushingly shew themselves in all their naked deformity. These, and Such as These, come to us in sheep's clothings, having the garb of harmlessness and innocence, and professing to be the Leaders of the Flock to pleasant and refreshing pastures; but who have inwardly the passions and the hearts of wolves—greedy, voracious, and destructive; and instead of bringing us into the peaceful sheep-walks of Heavenly Love, and beside the still and cooling Waters of Eternal Life, spread distrust and dismay and desolation and despair all around. GOD Grant that we may not enter into their communion; and *that we may not be doomed to hearken to any such Prophet!* [Deut. xiii, 3.] for though amidst the seducing arts of Science and Talent, falsely so called, their words may seem to be sweeter than honey to the lips, they are full of all deceivableness, and bitter as wormwood is to the stomach. In the anguish of his heart, and with an expression of sorrow peculiarly his own, at the prevalence of such Teachers, false to themselves, their Neighbours, and their GOD, in his day did the Prophet Jeremiah thus exclaim: *Mine heart within me is broken because of the Prophets; all my bones shake; I am like a drunken Man, and like a Man whom wine hath overcome, because of The LORD, and because of the Words of His Holiness; for the Land is full of (Spiritual) Adulterers; for because of swearing the Land mourneth; the pleasant places of the Wilderness are dried up, and their course is evil, and their force is not right; for both Prophet and Priest are profane. Yea, in My House have I Found their wickedness, Saith The LORD: I have Seen folly in the Prophets of Samaria; they prophesied in Baal, and caused My People Israel to err: I have Seen also in the Prophets of Jerusalem an horrible thing; they commit adultery and walk in lies; they strengthen also the hands of Evil-Doers, that None doth return from his wickedness: they are all of them unto Me as Sodom, and the Inhabitants thereof as Gomorrah. Therefore thus Saith The LORD of Hosts concerning the Prophets, "Behold, I will Feed them with wormwood, and Make them drink the water of gall; for from the Prophets of Jerusalem is profaneness gone forth into all the Land."* Thus Saith The LORD of Hosts, "*Hearken not unto the words of the Prophets, that prophecy unto you! they make you vain, they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the Mouth of The LORD. They say still unto them, that despise Me, 'THE LORD hath Said, Ye shall have Peace!' and they say unto Every One, that walketh after the imagination of his own heart, 'No evil shall come upon you! for who hath stood in the Council of The LORD, and hath perceived and heard His Word? who hath marked His Word and heard It?' I have not Sent these Prophets, yet they ran; I have not Spoken to them, yet they prophesied: but if they had stood in My Council, and had caused My People to hear My Words, then they should have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their doings. I have Heard what the Prophets said, that Prophecy lies in My Name, saying, 'I have dreamed! I have dreamed!' How long shall this be in the heart of the Prophets, that prophecy lies? yea, they are Prophets of the deceit of their own heart; which think to cause My People to forget My Name by their dreams, which they tell every Man to his Neighbour. The Prophet, that hath a dream, let him tell a dream: and he, that hath My Word, let him speak My Word faithfully! What is the chaff to the wheat?" Saith The LORD.—Jer. xxiii, 9 to 11. 13 to 18. 21, 22. 25 to 28.*

St. Paul put forth, in his Christian love and charity, a supplicatory admonition to try the Spirits of Men, whether they be of GOD or not, before their doctrines are yielded to, saying, *Now I beseech you, Brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the Doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them! for they, that are such, serve not The LORD JESUS CHRIST, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the Simple.*—Rom. xvi, 17, 18. Also, *Let no Man deceive you with vain words!* [Eph. v, 6.] and again, *Beware lest any Man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of Men, after the rudiments of the World, and not after CHRIST!*—Col. ii, 8. In the Spirit of Prophecy the Apostle Peter in like manner spreads his cautionary shield around us, saying, *There shall be false Teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying The LORD That Bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And Many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the Way of Truth shall be evil spoken of; and through covetousness shall they, with feigned words, make merchandize of you: spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings, while they feast with you; having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable Souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed Children; which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray: these are wells without water; clouds that are carried with a tempest: for when they speak great swelling words of vanity they allure, through the lusts of the Flesh, through much wantonness, those, that were clean escaped from them, who live in error; while they promise them liberty, they themselves are the Servants of corruption: for of whom a Man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.*—2 Peter ii, 1 to 3. 13 to 15. 17 to 19. St. John's meek admonition tells us to believe not every Spirit; but to try the Spirits, whether they are of GOD: because many false Prophets are gone out into the World: they are of the World; therefore speak they of the World, and the World heareth them.—1 John iv, 1 to 5. In the earlier day of Prophecy, Micah thus characterizes the false Teachers and Dealers in subtle devices brought within his penetrating glance: *Thus Saith The LORD concerning the Prophets that make My People err, that bite with their teeth, and cry "Peace;" and he that putteth not into their mouths, they even prepare war against him: they build up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity: the Heads thereof judge for reward, and the Priests thereof teach for hire; and the Prophets thereof divine for money: yet will they lean upon The LORD, and say, "Is not The LORD among us? None evil can come upon us!" therefore Night shall be unto you, that ye shall not have a vision; and it shall be dark unto you, that ye shall not divine, and the Sun shall go down over the Prophets, and the Day shall be dark over them: then shall the Seers be ashamed, and the Diviners confounded: yea, they shall all cover their lips: for there is no Answer of GOD: therefore shall Zion, for your sake, be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps; and the Mountain of the House as the high Places of the Forest.*—Micah iii, 5. 10, 11. 6, 7. 12. With the same mighty Spirit of true Divination did St. Paul characterize prophetically the false and hypocritical Teachers of after Generations, saying, *In the last days perilous times shall come; for Men shall be Lovers of their own Selves, covetous, Boasters, proud, unholy, heady, high-minded, Lovers of pleasures more than Lovers of GOD; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from Such, (the Apostle says,) turn away! These resist the Truth: Men of corrupt minds; reprobate concerning the Faith: (adding,) Evil Men and Seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.*—2 Tim. iii, 1 to 5. 8. 13. And again, *The time will come, when they will not endure sound Doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves Teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the Truth; and shall be turned into fables.*—2 Tim. iv, 3, 4.

But varying the view, let us beware of the false Prophets of the heart, those alluring and seducing vanities and deceptions that arise within ourselves, and which come forth in sheep's clothing, softened and palliated by affection, by custom, and by prejudice! Let us beware more especially of these, regarding them as our chiefest Enemies; for indeed they are as ravenous wolves within us, gnawing and tearing our Spiritual vitals, and drawing us towards the den of everlasting destruction! Let us beware of these; for if against them we are guarded, through humility to GOD, and a lively faith in His Word, trusting not in our own strength, but in the Watchful Care and Powerful Arm of The Great SHEPHERD of our Souls, then shall we have nothing to fear from false Prophets or false Teachers; for the Wolf of the evening will fly before The LION of the Tribe of Judah.

Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do Men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?—  
16.

Professions may deceive, but actions cannot so easily: they prove the character. Peace may be preached with the tongue; but if war be in the heart, it will eventually break out; and then the delusion vanishes; and the Son of Belial is seen in all his natural deformity and ferocity: the assumed garb of Friendship and Brotherhood is thrown aside. If love be preached, can it be so without dissimulation, when covetousness is seen to be the main-spring of conduct? if humility be taught, can this be consistent with a haughty look and a lofty and disdainful eye?

St. Luke's version of the Text is, *For every tree is known by its own fruit: for of thorns Men do not gather figs; nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes.*—Luke vi, 44.

Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit; neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.—17, 18.

As with the vegetable World so is it with the Moral: if first principles, which are the seeds of action, whether sown by ourselves or Others, be good or bad, so will be the fruit thereof, which are the actions themselves. The heart of Man is prone to evil, and, like a stubborn soil, requires to be worked and cultured with the utmost care and labour: but, if such be bestowed, the good seed cannot fail to produce abundant increase through the refreshing Dew of HEAVENLY Grace, and the Invigorating Beams of The SUN of Righteousness. If, however, the good seed be left to itself, and the tillage of the soil be neglected, that tender seed must perish, and then thorns and briars, will spring up, and drain the heart of all its fructiferous juices, and leave it impoverished indeed! Nor is it any injustice on the Part of GOD, that Man is evil from his Youth and in his very Nature, since he is so amply Supplied by Almighty Power with the Means of Overcoming it through the Merits and Mediation of CHRIST, and the Gift of the Uncion of The HOLY SPIRIT. And, indeed, but for such a warfare how would this Life be a state of trial and probation, and what claim would Man have over the other Animate Objects of Creation, who by instinct fulfil, though blindly, the Ordinances of their MAKER.

St. Luke treasures a larger record of this part of our SAVIOUR'S Sermon, for in the Gospel according to him, it is thus written: *A good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. A good Man, out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is good: and an evil Man, out of the evil treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is evil:*



*for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.*—Luke vi, 43. 45. How carefully, therefore, should we guard, how cautiously store our hearts with thoughts and impulses that may not offensively be Heard in Heaven!

△ Every tree, that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire.—19.

The fate of an unprofitable tree, that cumbereth the ground, and is, therefore, cut down and cast into the fire, is an awful image of that Destiny, that awaits the Soul, which is unproductive of good, and, therefore, unprofitable to Him that Planted and hath Watered it; and which, if it bring not forth good fruit can hardly fail of bringing forth evil fruit. But the burning of the Tree has an end with the Tree's existence, which is then but short; and of the act of its destruction it feels no consciousness: not so, the Immortal Soul of Man, that is cut down from all hope of Forgiveness, and is cast into the Fire, which is never quenched; for there the Tree still exists, notwithstanding the ravaging fire of an accusing conscience and the sensitiveness of sufferings the most piercing and poignant, and it will then become fully acquainted with what no stretch of its imagination can here enable it to conceive, the effect of an Everlasting Banishment from the Goodness and Grace of GOD. [See reflections on verse 10 of chapter iii.]

On another occasion our Blessed SAVIOUR is reported to have Said, *I am the True Vine, and My FATHER is The Husbandman: every Branch in Me, that beareth not fruit, He Taketh away: and every Branch, that beareth fruit, He Purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Abide in Me, and I in you! as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in Me! I am The Vine, ye are the Branches: he that abideth in Me, and I in him, the Same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing. If a Man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and Men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. Herein is My FATHER Glorified, that ye bear much fruit. Ye have not chosen Me; but I have Chosen you, and Ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain.*—John xv, 1 to 6. 8. 16.

St. Luke's record of the Text is thus: *And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree, therefore, which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire.*—Chap. iii, 9.

Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.—20.

A repetition of the Text at verse 16, to which a reference may be made for the meditations upon it.

△ Not every One, that saith unto Me, "Lord! Lord!" shall enter into the KINGDOM of HEAVEN; but he, that doeth the Will of My FATHER, Which is in Heaven.—21.

A belief, formal as being merely the utterance of the tongue, and not the growth of the heart and the vital principle of action, cannot be Acceptable to GOD, Who, Seeing the heart in all its inmost recesses, and to Whom no impurity or hypocrisy shall find entrance, cannot, Consistently with His Own Nature, Receive the Professors of so hollow and unfruitful a faith into the KINGDOM of HEAVEN, Where nothing, that savours of Untruth, can find access. It is not the saying "LORD! LORD!" or the conformity to the mere ceremonials of Religious worship, that can obtain the countenance and Favour of An All-Righteous GOD. It is not for such Spirits, though Immortal, that CHRIST Put forth His Gracious Mediation. But it is the dedication of the heart in sincerity and truth to The DIVINE Will, and to the performance of Its Com-

mandments, that constitutes the rightful worship and becoming reverence of A GOD of Truth. This is the lively Faith, that justifies the hope of Salvation and Sanctification through CHRIST and The HOLY SPIRIT, and that fits for a meetness for The KINGDOM of HEAVEN. Let us not, therefore, content Ourselves with a dead and barren faith; but strive to manifest its sincerity by following it up with works that essentially grow from it! St. Paul illustrates the same weighty Maxim: *Not the Hearers of the Law are just before GOD; but the Doers of the Law shall be justified*: [Rom. ii, 13.] and again, figuratively, *He is not a Jew, which is One outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the Flesh: but he is a Jew, which is One inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose Praise is not of Men, but of GOD.*—Rom. ii, 28, 29. In the pure dictate of Apostolic Exhortation, St. James also thus affectionately and impressively spreads the same Doctrine, saying, *Be ye Doers of the Word, and not Hearers only! deceiving your own selves: for if Any be a Hearer of the Word, and not a Doer, he is like unto a Man beholding his natural face in a glass; for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of Man he was: But Whoso looketh into the perfect Law of Liberty and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful Hearer, but a Doer of the Work, this Man shall be Blessed in his deed. If any Man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this Man's religion is vain. Pure Religion and undefiled, before GOD and The FATHER, is this, To visit the Fatherless and Widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the World.*—James i, 22 to 27.

St. Luke hath it thus, as the Address of our SAVIOUR: *Why call ye Me, "LORD! LORD!" and do not the Things Which I Say?*—Chap. vi, 46.

Many will say to Me in that Day, "LORD! LORD! Have we not prophesied in Thy Name, and in Thy Name have cast out Devils, and in Thy Name done many wonderful works?"—22.

How awful is this consideration, that there should be Men so wilfully blind in their understandings as to deceive themselves into a belief that they are Prophets and Ministers of JEHOVAH, and therefore have a positive right to an Inheritance in His KINGDOM, when they have not done the Work of The LORD heartily, as unto The LORD, but unto Men; having only called upon His Name, and done Him homage with their lips, when He Himself was not virtually within their thoughts, and still less in their hearts! How terrible will be their confusion, when they find into what dreadful misery their viciously perverted minds have brought them, so sunk in the mire of corruption as to have almost lost, by disuse, the faculty of discriminating between good and evil. Be it our study to avoid so sad an infatuated Self-destruction, by cherishing a reverential feeling towards The Name of The MOST HIGH, whenever we utter or think upon It; and, not in outward profession only, but inwardly and from the warmth of a truly Spiritual affection, seek to serve Him faithfully, and do His Work effectually, profiting by His Gracious Help Held out to us by His HOLY SPIRIT, through the Reconciling Mediation of His Only SON, our SAVIOUR! Let us take care that our motives be pure, and we be upright in all our dealings with GOD's Holy Name! so that The ALMIGHTY'S Anger be not Kindled against us, Which it would be, if taking His Name in vain. The fate of Balaam, who though Gifted with Prophecy, was the willing Victim of Hypocrisy, is a sad but instructive lesson, that the Body, without the Spirit of Religion, is dead. May we remember that the same Measure of DIVINE Retribution will be Meted out to us, if we in like manner are found offending. The pre-eminently Gifted Apostle of the Gentiles bespoke the fruitlessness of the

Prophetic power, without the accordance of the reverence and love of the heart towards GOD and Man, saying, *Though I have the Gift of Prophecy, and have not Charity*, (which signifieth universal love,) *I am nothing*.—1 Cor. xiii, 2.

And then will I Profess unto them, "I never Knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity!"—23.

They, who are not the Disciples of JESUS in deed and in truth, will find, to their eternal sorrow, that the hypocritical assumption of that title will considerably aggravate their offence in the Eyes of their All-Knowing and Almighty GOD: and this they themselves will own, when the acknowledgment will be too late to profit them, as the day of available contrition will have passed. The SEARCHER of all hearts will know them, who, under the specious pretence of being in the Service of their FATHER, Which is in Heaven, were Deceivers, false to their trust; seeking the praise of Men and not of GOD, Who, therefore, will Strike their trembling ears with the despair-awakening sound, "Depart from Me!" May Those, if any amongst us, who do not, in singleness of heart, feel within themselves some sincerity in their professed devotedness to the Service and Worship of GOD, and have not a cherished hope, however humble, in His Mercies, through the Merits and Mediation of His Blessed SON, think, and think deeply, while reflection can benefit them, what will be the effect of such an Expression of Displeasure by The JUDGE of all Men in the Day of The Great Assize! What unutterable anguish will then pervade the Souls thus driven from the Joy-diffusing Presence of An All-Wise and Benignant GOD!

△ Therefore Whosoever heareth These Sayings of Mine, and doeth Them, I will Liken him unto a wise Man, which built his house upon a rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock.—24, 25.

How forcibly are the strength and beauty of Holiness thus Illustrated: to hear and to obey constitutes Man's wisdom, and insures his happiness. All other Beings both in Heaven and Earth fulfil the Appointments PROVIDENCE has Made for them; and in this, doubtless, consists their felicity: even the Angels, who are now so far exalted above us, delight to do GOD'S Will, Who, though He Created them, has not, as in Man, Needed to Pay the Cost of Redeeming them. May we, in this our day, be wise unto Salvation! and, looking to CHRIST as The ROCK of That Salvation, let us build up our faith in Him, and let Him and His Word be our Strength and Stay! Let us dig deep and lay in Him the foundation of that Superstructure of hope in the Gracious Promises of JEHOVAH, that we shall in the end enter into and for ever inhabit the Mansions of Perfect Peace and Holiness! A Superstructure, resting on Such a Foundation, not all the undermining wiles, or furious assaults of the Devil, will be able to overthrow. With the Gracious opportunities afforded, in this our day, of both hearing and reading the Word of GOD, let us never lose the recollection or impression, that it is more essential we should mark and inwardly digest the Blessed Truths That Belong to Everlasting Life, and that, though *to hearken is better than the fat of rams*, yet that obedience is the Acceptable Sacrifice to GOD; and that, as we thus know His Commandments, happy only can we hope to be, if, in the spirit of a lively Faith in CHRIST JESUS, we do Them. The rain of impiety may descend around our dwelling, and floods of ungodly Men may come violently against it, and the fierce winds of controversy and Spiritual pride and haughtiness may beat upon it; but that dwelling shall not fall, neither shall its internal peace be lastingly affected; for it is founded upon The ROCK of Ages.

St. Luke's narrative, though in effect the same, has some beautiful varying expressions, immediately following the Exclamation of our SAVIOUR: *Why call ye Me "LORD! LORD!" and do not the Things Which I Say? Whosoever cometh to Me, and heareth My Sayings, and doeth Them, I will Shew you to whom he is like; he is like a Man, which built an house, and digged deep, and laid a foundation on a rock; and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it; for it was founded upon a rock.—like vi, 46 to 48.*

And every One that heareth These Sayings of Mine, and doeth Them not, shall be Likened unto a foolish Man, which built his house upon the sand; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.—26, 27.

The converse of the simile, reasonable and natural as it is, shall, with equal certainty, be realized: for the Man, who fixes his trust and confidence, and builds his hopes of Acceptance and Favour with GOD on the sandy foundation of his own merits and righteousness, will find the whole fabric crumble to pieces around him, when the Searching Rain of Heaven's SPIRIT Descends, and the floods of Its Just Anger shall be Let Loose, and the Winds of Its Eternal Vengeance shall Scorchingly Blow. And great, indeed, will be the fall and desolation, even from the pinnacle of imagined Elevation in the Land of Blessed Spirits, to the lowest depth of misery and interminable confusion in communion with the Damned. How beautifully does the Prophet Jeremiah illustrate this perverseness and Self-confidence in Human Kind, as the Declaration of JEHOAH: *The stork in the Heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle, and the crane, and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but My People know not the Judgment of The LORD! How do ye say? "We are wise, and the Law of the LORD is with us." Lo, certainly in vain Made He it; the pen of the Scribes in vain: the wise Men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the Word of The LORD! and what wisdom is in them?—Chap. viii, 7 to 9.* Paul forcibly admonishes us that other foundation can no Man lay, than That Laid, Which is JESUS CHRIST. *Now if any Man build upon His Foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every Man's work shall be made manifest.—1 Cor. iii, 11. 13.* And the Sacred Writer to the Hebrews saith, *If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the Truth, there remaineth no more Sacrifice for sins; but a certain fearful looking-for of judgment, and Fiery Indignation Which shall Devour the Adversaries.—Heb. x, 26, 27.* Such it means as are Adversaries of GOD'S Laws and of CHRIST'S mediation.

And it came to pass, when JESUS had Ended These Sayings, the People were astonished at His Doctrine; for He Taught them as One having authority; and not as the Scribes.—28, 29.

That the wonder of the People was excited, when GOD, in the likeness of Man, thus Laid Open to them the Treasures of DIVINE Knowledge, and Set before them good and evil in their true Light, Encouraging them, as a Father his children, to cleave to that which is good, lest the Evil One, displayed in all his guiles and horrors, should claim them and take them to himself, is perfectly natural. But is it not rather surprising that Any, who now hear These Sayings, involving, as they do, the final Destiny of the Immortal Soul, should be Hearers only, and not Doers also? The Doctrines Delivered by CHRIST were the Fountains of Truth and Righteousness; and He Impressed Them with an Earnestness, That Shewed how Deeply He Felt for the most vital Interests of His

Hearers, Expressed with a force and beauty that could not but win and rivet attention. HE had no sinister Views to Serve; and did not, therefore, Flatter the weaknesses or Palliate the vices of His Auditors; but with all the Combined Properties of Truth, Wisdom and Goodness, Inseparable from Him, Spoke Boldly the Words, Which, on the one hand, Shewed forth the Power of GOD unto Salvation in them that believe, and, believing, turn from the evil of their ways, and learn and strive to do well; and, on the other hand, were Calculated with equal Impressiveness to Point out the utter hopelessness of escape from the Wrath to Come for them, who neglect so Great Salvation.

CHAP. viii.—When He (JESUS) was Come down from the Mountain, great Multitudes followed Him.—1.

The Word of GOD in like manner Descending into our hearts, and treasured there, will Influence us irresistibly to follow Its Guidance, and to build upon Its Promises from a combined sense of reverence and love, of gratitude and admiration. And though CHRIST hath not Come Visibly to us in this our Generation, yet hath His Word, Which, Descending from the Mountain of His Holiness, Flowed down to us; and thus is He in Spirit with us, and Teaching us with an Authority, that None should gainsay, Breathing the Fragrance of Heavenly Truths unto All Such as are not Hearers only, but Doers also of His most Holy Will and Pleasure. May we, whenever we hear His Word, or ourselves peruse It, elevate our minds to the contemplation of His Gracious Self-Pouring into our Ears, and down even to the skirts of our hearts, These Blessed Truths of Everlasting Life; and, as He unquestionably is Essentially, though Invisibly Present at all times with us, may we hallow His Name and His Nature, and be Followers in the Train of His Adopted Servants, hailing Him as our ADVOCATE and REDEEMER, as our PROPHET, PRIEST and KING!

△ And, Behold, there came a Leper, and worshipped Him, saying, “LORD, if Thou Wilt, Thou canst Make me clean!” And JESUS Put forth His Hand, and Touched him, Saying, “I Will: be thou clean!” And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.—2, 3.

In confirmation of The DIVINITY of our SAVIOUR'S Nature was this Manifestation of His Power; and all Things in Earth, as in Heaven were, when He Chose to Display That Power, subservient to His Will, and yielded to His Bidding. Though His Mission was Paramountly for the Salvation of the Souls of Men, and so Continues in this our day, yet, when Sojourning on Earth, He was not Unmindful of the Bodily sufferings of His Saints, nor Unwilling or Unable to Relieve them. The Sick in body on their coming to Him to be Healed, and having faith thereunto, were at once and instantly Recovered by the mere Utterance of His Commanding Word. Yet though the Exemplification of such visible Instances of His Tenderness and Compassion was limited to His Personal Appearance upon Earth, and Extended only after His Departure to His Apostles and Disciples; yet the Saving, Healing, Enlivening, Restoring and Comforting Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT is ever Ready to be Imparted to the Soul, that is sick and sorrowing for its sins, and sighing to be Healed by The PHYSICIAN of Souls, and will come to CHRIST in true humility and godly sincerity, and, out of a lively faith, seek to Him for Pardon and Reconciliation, and say unto Him, “LORD, if Thou Wilt, Thou canst Make me clean!” It is then that The Blessed JESUS, through the Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT, will, in due season, Put forth His Hand, and Touch the heart, and Convert it, that it may turn to the Holiness of His Ways: and thus will the sin, that cleaved to it as a leprosy, whether livid as that malady, or black as darkness, or red as crim-

son, be Removed, and its stain Blotted out in The SAVIOUR'S Blood; and the Soul will become in purity, by Regeneration, even like unto the Spirit of a newborn Babe.

St. Mark's account is thus: *And there came a Leper to Him, (JESUS,) beseeching Him, and kneeling down to Him, and saying unto Him, "If Thou wilt, Thou canst Make me clean!" And JESUS, Moved with Compassion, Put forth His Hand, and Touched him, and Saith unto him, "I Will, be thou clean!" And as soon as He had Spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed.*—Chap. i, 40 to 42.

St. Luke's narrative is as follows: *It came to pass, when He (JESUS) was in a certain City, behold, a Man full of leprosy; who, seeing JESUS, fell on his face, and besought Him, saying, "LORD, if Thou wilt, Thou canst Make me clean!" And He Put forth His Hand, and Touched him, Saying, "I Will, be thou clean!" And immediately the leprosy departed from him.*—Chap. v, 12, 13.

And JESUS Saith unto him, "See thou tell no Man; but go thy way; shew thyself to the Priest, and offer the gift, that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them!"—4.

Thus by Example, as well as Precept, did The HOLY JESUS Do Good for Righteousness' sake; and not for the praise of Men: HE had Performed a Work of Mercy from Motives of Pure Benevolence; and He had Told His Disciples, that what they did in secret for The LORD'S Sake, The LORD would Reward openly. Thus should we, in order faithfully to follow the Footsteps, as well as Precepts, of This PATTERN of all Excellence, not only not blazon forth any work of charity we may have engaged in, but even enjoin silence to the Object of it, that the fame thereof may be confined to HEAVEN, Where all its motives will be Duly Weighed, and Where, if done indeed unto GOD, and not unto Men for the sake of Human approbation, it will break forth as a sweet sound of everlasting harmony, the fuller and the richer in proportion to the limited spread of it upon Earth. As one proof, amongst others, which will be offered, that CHRIST Came not to Destroy the Law, but to Fulfil It, in the same instant that He so Miraculously Worked the Cure upon the Leper, He Forgot not what was due to the Ordinances of the Law, but Commanded the Man to offer in holiness the sacrifice of thanksgiving unto The LORD with the symbol of gratitude, which the Law, as delivered by Moses, appointed. And well would it be for Christians if they, in like manner, so consulted their Elder Brethren's practices, and adhered to them, in spirit at least, if not in letter; and upon every Deliverance from evil, whether Spiritual or temporal, offered a free-will offering unto GOD: for All Things in the Holy Scriptures were Written for our admonition. The offerings of first fruits, whether of the labour of our hands or of our minds, to Objects of Christian charity, of sacrifices through abstinence, and such like exercises of reverential love to GOD, manifesting themselves in acts of kindness and benevolence to our Fellow-Mortals, so embodying the spirit of the Jewish ceremonials into the Christian character, would be uniting more closely the tie of Brotherhood. The law of the Leper, in the day of his cleansing, was Delivered by The LORD unto Moses, and is recorded in Leviticus xiv.

Though the ceremonial parts of the offerings are not continued under the Christian Dispensation, or at least in practice do not prevail, might not the Spiritual part be used with great propriety and becomingness by Christians, who have Mercifully been Restored from sickness to health of body, and still more so by those, who have exchanged a disordered for a regenerated, a ~~dead~~ <sup>dead</sup> ~~Soul~~ <sup>Soul</sup>, through the Blood of The LAMB of GOD and the Gracious Operation of The HOLY GHOST, the Visible Descent of Which was the First Fruit of That Sacrifice? And in these cases it would be well to make some tributary offer-

ing towards the relief of Others of the Brethren, suffering under the same or similar maladies of Soul or Body; offerings in proportion to our circumstances; and which, according to their ability, the Poorest might render, were it only in acts and attentions of Personal kindness and assistance. This would be to become Israelites in the best sense of the relationship, and to have rank in the Records of Heaven as Citizens of the New Jerusalem, bringing us within the Fold of that Flock, of which CHRIST JESUS, in His Exaltation, is The Only and The Everlasting SHEPHERD.

St. Luke's record closely corresponds with the Text: *And He (JESUS) Charged him (the Man, whom He had Healed of his leprosy,) to tell no Man; but (Said) "Go, and shew thyself to the Priest; and offer, for thy cleansing, according as Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them."* And then this Evangelist adds, *But so much the more went there a fame abroad of Him: and great Multitudes came together to hear, and to be Healed by Him of their infirmities.*—Chap. v, 14, 15.

△ And when JESUS was Entered into Capernaum, there came unto Him a Centurion, beseeching Him, and saying, "LORD! my Servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented."—5, 6.

This instance of exemplary faith is doubly remarkable: first, as being afforded by a Gentile, who had been born and educated in and under all the prejudices and impressions of Heathen idolatry; and on whom the Light of Truth could only have dawned through his occasional intercourse with the Jews, who were so jealous of a Stranger's interference: and secondly, as proceeding from a Soldier, a Man engaged in a profession not in general friendly to the humble-mindedness that should characterize a Christian. But from hence, as from various other Instances in the Christian Narrative, it will be seen, that GOD is no RESPECTER of Persons; but that High or Low, Rich or Poor, Bonds-Men or Free-men, Publicans or Sinners of all ranks and degrees, who acknowledge, with true contrition, the error of many of their past ways, and turn unto The LORD in the sincerity and singleness of their hearts, and in the fulness of faith in CHRIST JESUS, will assuredly find Mercy at His Hands.

St. Luke's narrative of the transactions opens thus: *Now when He (JESUS) had Ended all His Sayings in the audience of the People, He Entered into Capernaum. And a certain Centurion's Servant, who was dear unto him, was sick and ready to die. And when he heard of JESUS, he sent unto Him the Elders of the Jews, beseeching Him, that He would Come and Heal his Servant: and when they came to JESUS, they besought Him instantly, saying, "That he was worthy for whom He should Do this; for he loveth our Nation, and he hath built us a Synagogue." Then JESUS Went with them. And when He was now not far from the House, the Centurion sent Friends to Him, saying unto Him, "LORD, Trouble not Thyself! for I am not worthy that Thou shouldest Enter under my roof: wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto Thee: but Say in a Word! and my Servant shall be Healed."*—Chap. vii, 1 to 7.

From hence it appears that, in the marked humbleness of his mind, the Centurion had sought the intercession of the Jews in his application to our SAVIOUR; and that he had bought that influence by a gracious and liberal dealing towards them, in expending no inconsiderable portion, perhaps, of his fortune in building a Temple or Place for their worship. Brotherly love as well as Charity seems to have animated this Warrior's heart: and amongst the many amiable and exemplary traits in the character of this once benighted Heathen, but afterwards Enlightened and amongst the very earliest Christians, it is not the least amiable one, the tender and persevering regard shewed by him for the state of One even of his many Servants and Followers, amidst the number of claims, from the military rank he held, upon his time and attention.

And JESUS Saith unto him, "I will Come and Heal him." The Centurion answered, and said, "LORD! I am not worthy, that Thou shouldst Come under my roof: but Speak the Word only! and my Servant shall be Healed."—7, 8.

JESUS Knew that His Word would Reach unto the ends of the World, and Fulfil His Will, without His Visible Personal Presence as Man: He Knew also that the Centurion believed in Such Its Efficacy: for He Knew all things, and He Knew what was in Man: by Saying, therefore, that *He would Come and Heal the Servant*, He Intended to Impress on the minds of His Jewish Auditors a sense of shame for their incredulity, who, though the Miracles He Did were Done under their eyes, would not believe Him to be The MESSIAH. Hence we may also draw the useful reflection, that, though The Man CHRIST JESUS is not now in Body Present with us, yet His Word is, Which is equally Efficacious to Heal Those, who lie at home sick of the Palsy of the Soul, trembling and agitated and grievously tormented with a wounded conscience and the fearful apprehension of The DIVINE Displeasure, if they have but faith, such as the Centurion's, who believed in Him as The LORD of Life and Health and every Good.

To the most fervent Faith the Centurion added (as has been before hinted at,) the virtue of humility. For, exalted as was his station from having command over Others, respected as was his character for the many amiable qualities he displayed, and revered as he was by the Jews themselves for his kindness and liberality towards their Nation, he was so far from assuming to himself any superiority on these accounts, when contrasted with The Lowly JESUS, that he would not admit himself to be worthy of receiving Him as a Guest in his house: but, with the ardent piety of a true Christian, prayed The MESSIAH only to Speak the Word, in the fullest and avowed confidence that so would the Servant be instantly Recovered. O that each professing Christian had but an equal share of lowliness and piety of heart, when entering the House of GOD, and would, by the application of a lively Faith to the hearing of The Revealed Word and Will of The CREATOR, let That Word, so Freely and Mercifully Spoken to All, be Effectual to the Sanctification and Salvation of the Soul from the disease of sin, which so ordinarily preys upon it, and which, if not Cured by The Great PHYSICIAN of Souls, must terminate in the grave of hope, and in the abyss of despair. For (as in spirit saith the Royal Psalmist,) *The LORD Heareth the desire of the Humble; He even Prepareth their heart, and will Cause His Ear to Hear them.*—Ps. x, 17.

"For I am a Man under authority, having Soldiers under me; and I say to this Man, 'Go!' and he goeth; and to Another, 'Come!' and he cometh; and to my Servant, 'Do this!' and he doeth it."—9.

The Centurion seems to have considered the situation, that was cast upon him, such as would be offensive to the Peaceful and Humble JESUS; with Whose Disciples, from the report of His Doctrines, the Centurion might have supposed the exercise of his own little brief but absolute authority incompatible; and this he seems to have urged as an additional reason for not troubling The MASTER to Come to his house. The having Servants under him, and those Soldiers, (whose every office was unsanctioned by the Example, if not hostile to the Doctrines of Christianity, this Centurion, being himself as an Officer under the controuling influence of Those of higher rank, who had but to say to him, Go and accomplish any work of destruction! and he of necessity obeyed, and might himself command Others to do in like manner his will, without leaving them at liberty to consult the dictates of their consciences,) did to the discrimi-



nating mind of this excellent Centurion make him unfit to receive, under his roof, The PRINCE of Peace.

△ When JESUS Heard it, He marvelled, and said to them that followed, "Verily I Say unto you, I have not Found so great faith, no, not in Israel."—10.


What a just, but cutting Reproof must this have been to All of Israel, who heard It; and who were not callous to the sense of right feeling and Spiritual Truth; or, indeed, who had not hearts of stone! And well may it be for us, individually, to take care that the same thing be not virtually laid to our charge, by our lukewarmness in our practice being inconsistent with our profession, and by being far outdone by Those, who have had far less advantages than ourselves in Religious Knowledge, and in the Means of Grace; nor let the poor unlettered African, enlightened only by a single Missionary's feeble rays, be found to have more of Faith and Christian humility, than we, on whom The SUN of Righteousness has Shone, and is still Shining in His Meridian Brightness!

"And I Say unto you, That Many shall come from the East and West, and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the KINGDOM of HEAVEN."—11.

What Glorious Tidings must These have proved at the time to Such as the Centurion, who respected the Jews, and in a degree revered their Religion as superior, at least to any known to them; but who might have regarded themselves, from the experience of the strong prejudices of the Jews, as for ever shut out from the pale of their Church. The fulfilment of This Prophecy is now, as it were, before our eyes, and is so much matter of obvious and necessary result from the extension of Christianity, as hardly to be called a point of Faith. But let us recollect that to have heard the Word of GOD, or to say, "LORD! LORD!" or even to Prophecy in the Name of JESUS, is not in itself sufficient to give us an Inheritance with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and to sit with them in the KINGDOM of HEAVEN. In allusion to this Glorious Event of the Universality of CHRIST'S KINGDOM, and Its Comprehension of all the Faithful, whether Gentile or Jew, the Prophet Isaiah foretold, that *it shall come to pass in the last days, that the Mountain of The LORD'S House shall be Established in the top of the Mountains, and shall be Exalted above the Hills; and all Nations shall flow unto It. And Many People shall go and say, "Come ye, and let us go up to the Mountain of The LORD, to the House of The GOD of Jacob! And He will Teach us of His Ways; and we will walk in His Paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the Law, and the Word of The LORD from Jerusalem!"*—Isa. ii, 2, 3. And in another place the same Prophet, when foretelling the Advent of The MESSIAH, thus added: *In that Day there shall be a ROOT of Jesse, Which shall Stand for an Ensign of the People: to It shall the Gentiles seek; and His Rest shall be Glorious.*—Isa. xi, 10. The Prophet Malachi pointed to the same Glorious Epoch in the Events awaiting Mankind, thus: *From the rising of the Sun even unto the going down of the same, (saith The LORD,) My Name shall be Great among the Gentiles; and in every Place incense shall be offered unto My Name, and a pure offering: for My Name shall be Great among the Heathen, saith The LORD of Hosts.*—Mal. i, 11. The Call of the Gentiles, and the Outpouring upon them of the Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT, as a Consequence of The MESSIAH'S Advent and Sacrifice and Intercession, GOD thereby Opening the Door of Faith to them, and Granting them repentance unto Life Eternal, are Recorded in the Acts of the Apostles x, 45; xi, 18; xiv, 27: and St. Paul thus luminously adverts to the Same Great and Gracious Truth, drawing deeply from the Streams of Scriptural Authority for the confirmation of

his position, saying, *JESUS CHRIST* was a *MINISTER* of the Circumcision for the Truth of *GOD*, to Confirm the Promises Made unto the Fathers; and that the Gentiles might Glorify *GOD* for His Mercy, as it is Written [in Ps. xviii, 49,] “For this cause I will confess to Thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto Thy Name:” and again *He* saith, [in Deut. xxxii, 43,] “Rejoice ye Gentiles with His People!” and again, [Ps. cxvii, 1,] “Praise The *LORD* all ye Gentiles; and laud Him all ye People!” and again, *Esaïas* saith, [Isa. xi, 1. 10,] “There shall be a *ROOT* of *Jesse*: and He, That shall Rise to Reign over the Gentiles, in Him shall the Gentiles trust.”—Rom. xv, 8. 12. Indeed, St. Paul himself, peculiarly and triumphantly lays claim to the Office of ministering The *DIVINE* Light of Revelation to the Heathens, thus, in another part of the same Epistle, saying, *I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the Grace, That is Given me of GOD, that I should be the Minister of JESUS CHRIST to the Gentiles, ministering the Gospel of GOD, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be Acceptable, being Sanctified by The HOLY GHOST. I have, therefore, whereof I may glory, through JESUS CHRIST, in Those Things, Which Pertain to GOD: for I will not dare to speak of any of those things, which CHRIST hath not Wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed, through mighty Signs and Wonders by the Power of The SPIRIT of GOD: so that from Jerusalem and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the Gospel of CHRIST: yea, so have I strived to preach The Gospel, not where CHRIST was Named, lest I should build upon another Man's foundation: but as it is written* [in Isa. lii, 15,] “To whom He was not Spoken of, they shall see; and they, that have not heard, shall understand.”—Rom. xv, 15 to 21. And the same Apostle, when writing to the Ephesian Converts, avows, that for the sake of the Gentiles and in the Cause of *CHRIST*, he was then a Prisoner, declaring that the Dispensation of the Grace of *GOD* was Given to him for that object, adding, *For this Cause I, Paul, the Prisoner of JESUS CHRIST for you Gentiles, if ye have heard of the Dispensation of the Grace of GOD, Which is Given me to you-ward, how that by Revelation He Made Known unto me the Mystery, (as I wrote afore in a few words, [Chap. i, 9, 10.] whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the Mystery of CHRIST;) Which in other Ages was not Made Known unto the Sons of Men, as It is now Revealed unto His holy Apostles and Prophets by The SPIRIT, “That the Gentiles should be Fellow-Heirs, and of the same Body, and Partakers of His Promise in CHRIST by The Gospel;” Whereof I was Made a Minister according to the Gift of the Grace of GOD, Given unto me by the Effectual Working of His Power; unto me, who am less than the least of all Saints, is This Grace Given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the Unsearchable Riches of CHRIST; and to make all Men see what is the Fellowship of the Mystery, Which from the beginning of the World hath been Hid in GOD, Who Created all Things by JESUS CHRIST.*—Eph. iii, 1 to 9.

St. Luke's narrative of this part of our SAVIOUR'S Prophetic Address, is thus: *And they shall come from the East and from the West, and from the North and from the South, and shall sit down in the KINGDOM of GOD: and, behold, there are Last, which shall be First, and there are First, which shall be Last.*—Chap. xiii, 29, 30.

“But the Children of the Kingdom shall be Cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”—12. 


The rebellious Children of the Kingdom of Israel are thus Sentenced, for their infidelity and obduracy, to that darkness which prevails in the Soul, that wilfully shuts out the Light of The *HOLY SPIRIT*; where ~~is~~ weeping in tears of blood, and gnashing of teeth through the agony of never-ending remorse. Thus

shall the Apostates among the Chosen Seed have the KINGDOM of GOD Taken from them; and see It Given to Nations that rejoice in That Light, and gratefully walk Therein. The repeated mention in the Scriptures of outer darkness, and of weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth, as the condition of Those Cast out from the KINGDOM of HEAVEN, whether such Punishment be Inflicted in the very letter, or be a figure of the horrible state of the Damned, and Meant to convey the nearest idea of it, that the Human mind in this stage is capable of conceiving, should be the subject of our continual thoughts, that the dread of a fate so terrible may deter us from continuing in sin, if the Mercy of GOD, the Love of CHRIST, and Holiness for its own sake, will not induce us to take heed to our ways, that we find not the KINGDOM of HEAVEN Shut against us. For otherwise we shall sink into *outer* darkness, the very extreme of the most horrific gloom, unwilling to remain, yet trembling to go on, lest every step should increase the terror around us; and yet unable to go back: bewailing in all the agony of frantic despair, yet in perfect possession of our faculties; weeping, yet deriving no relief from our tears, but, on the contrary, having our sufferings heightened by the drops scalding like liquid ore: yea, and gnashing our teeth in the deep anguish of our woe, but at our own acknowledged folly in having preferred such darkness to Everlasting Light and Joy and Peace, when the choice was in our power.

And JESUS Said unto the Centurion, "Go thy way! and as thou hast believed, So be it Done unto thee!" And his Servant was Healed in the self-same hour.—13.

This is What The FOUNTAIN of all Mercy and all Goodness Says to every One, who comes unto Him in faith and in humility: "Go on thy way rejoicing, that, as thou hast believed and been faithful, thy state of trial and servitude on Earth ended, thou shalt reign with Me Eternally in the Heavens; Where shall be no more sickness, nor pain, nor apprehension, but all shall be perfect Happiness, and Joy without end." Life at its utmost attainment is even less than a moment, when compared with Eternity; whatever, therefore, may be the state of our suffering through sickness, or any other calamity, as the sickness of Those most endeared to us, it may indeed be said, that in the self-same hour we shall be Healed by the Power and Word of GOD, if we become His Patients and follow His Rules! Let us not, therefore, hesitate doing so, whilst our Life is Spared; lest we be Cut off in the midst of our malady, and there be no more Help for us!

St. Luke's conclusion of the narrative after our SAVIOUR'S Declaration of the pre-eminent faith shewn by the Centurion is thus: *And they, that were sent, returning to the house, found the Servant whole, that had been sick.*—Chap. vii, 10.

 And when JESUS was Come into Peter's house, He Saw his Wife's Mother laid, and sick of a fever: and He Touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she arose, and ministered unto them.—14, 15.

It was the Meat and Drink of The Holy JESUS, whilst on Earth, to Do His FATHER'S Will, and That Will was "to Go about Doing Good." In every Situation, and under all circumstances, opportunities were Embraced of Relieving the Sick in body, as an Earnest of a Readiness and Ability to Heal the Sickness of the Soul. The Servant of a Gentile Warrior, and the Aged Mother of an Apostle's Wife are alike Objects of His Tender Attention; being of the Same Flesh with Him, and Both equally Subjects of Consideration and Compassion in the Impartial Spirit of An All-Wise and All-Creating GOD. How Gracious equally to the Faithful, in this our day, are The DIVINE Dispensations,

Whereby they, as by the Touch of The SON of GOD, through the Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT, are Healed from the fever of Earthly affections not Warranted by DIVINE Sanction, and Raised from the bed of impurity to Spiritual Health, and Holiness of Life, and the Hope of Heavenly and Eternal Rest! Would that All, who minister about Holy Things, were Touched by The Same SPIRIT, that, being Sanctified themselves, they might effectually assist in the Cure of Others' Souls!

St. Mark's narrative is as follows: *Simon's Wife's Mother lay sick of a fever; and anon they tell Him (JESUS) of her: and He Came, and Took her by the hand; and Lifted her up; and immediately the fever left her; and she ministered unto them.*—Mark i, 30, 31. The Act of The SON of GOD, Stooping to Lift up an aged Woman, is a practical Lesson of Humanity, that exemplifies one feature of peculiar beauty in the Christian Character.

When the even was come, they brought unto Him Many that were possessed with Devils: and He Cast out the Spirits with His Word; and Healed All that were sick.—16.

The Power of GOD thus Exemplified over the Spirits of darkness, must have strikingly arrested the attention of the Beholders; and flashed conviction on their minds of the Presence of OMNIPOTENCE. The true meaning of the words, "possessed with Devils," may seem difficult of solution; and they have been variously interpreted: the greater probability, perhaps, is, that the Persons so possessed, were affected with derangement in their intellects, attended with the most distressing evidences of an evil and corrupt Nature; though with all the light of reason utterly extinguished in them, so as to be insensible of it. This state of madness seems, at least in some instances, ascribable solely to physical causes, since Persons, affected by it, have acted as very Devils incarnate, uttering all kinds of blasphemy and unhallowed imprecations, and breaking out into all imaginary excesses and impurities, who, previously to any symptoms of the malady, were not only not guilty of the least violence or apparent irregularity, but, on the contrary, were peaceful, sober, and pious Characters, and from the general purity and retirement of their lives, would not even have been suspected of knowing such horrible terms and phrases as in the paroxysms of their disordered intellects they utter, and which seem to spring from Hell. At such a time The Grace of The SPIRIT of GOD seems effectually Quenched within them, and the whole mind appears in immovable darkness, and beset with horror, and communicating dismay: indeed such a state may not unprofitably be viewed and contemplated as a not improbable representation of the future condition of the Damned.

It is not for Man arrogantly to inquire of his CREATOR, "why these things are?" though doubtless they are Ordained or Permitted for wise and benevolent ends: but it may be well for All, whose reason have not forsaken them, to consider that miserable and wretched, and naked and destitute as may seem the condition of Such, who, when on Earth, are possessed of Devils; yet enviable will it be, and so should it be judged of, when compared with those, who undergo no such redeeming chastisement here, but are Reserved unto the Day of Everlasting Wrath, when they shall be the Subjects of Satan, and associated only with Infernal Spirits for ever and ever. How changed will then be the state of him, who suffered on Earth, and of him, who midst all the Mercy Dealt out to him, blasphemed The Gracious SOURCE of It and defied His Power: the One, Healed and Restored, and in his right mind, will, at the Word of GOD, be Transplanted, as it were, from Hell to Heaven: the Other, in unutterable despair, will descend amongst the Spirits of the Damned, cursing and condemn-

ing his pride and vain-boasting, and his wilful blindness through the short span of life here, and seeing before him, as the wages of his sin, and as his exceeding bitter portion, Hell in all its horrors, without alleviation and without end.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto Him (JESUS) All, that were diseased, and Them, that were possessed with Devils. And all the City was gathered together at the door: and He Healed Many that were sick of divers diseases, and Cast out many Devils; and Suffered not the Devils to speak; because they knew Him.*—Chap. i, 32 to 34. These Satanic Possessors were not only obedient to the Command of CHRIST, as GOD, but were silent in His Presence: and the torments of the Damned will not reach, perhaps, the imagination of the Saints in Heaven, so as in any degree to disturb their harmony.

That it might be Fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias, the Prophet, saying, “Himself Took our infirmities, and Bare our sicknesses.”—17.

The Meek and Patient JESUS Himself Took upon His Pure and Holy SPIRIT the weight of our weaknesses and infirmities, and Bore the sicknesses of our Souls, which were great and grievous and altogether hopeless of remedy, but in His Merciful Substitution of Himself as The SUFFERER for our Salvation, to Make Atonement Thereby before The LORD for our offences. Yea, *He was Wounded for our transgression, He was Bruised for our iniquities, the Chastisement of our Peace was upon Him; and with His Stripes we are Healed:* [Isa. liii, 5.] as was proved by His Experience both in Life and in Death; to Which also His Apostle Peter thus refers, quoting the concluding passage of the Evangelical Prophet above recited: *CHRIST Suffered for us, His Own Self Bearing our sins, in His Own Body on the tree: by Whose Stripes* (if we have faith,) *we are Healed.*—1 Peter ii, 21. 24. *That it might be Fulfilled,* or “Whereby it was Fulfilled,” the Text, it is said, will equally bear in construction.

△ Now when JESUS Saw great Multitudes about Him, He Gave Commandment to depart unto the other side.—18.


So is it now, that there are great Multitudes who flock around the Name of JESUS, and profess to worship It: but it behoves them, and ourselves also, as having virtually heard, in His Word, His Preaching, and experiencing in His Promises the Efficacy of His Medicine for our sickly Souls, to return Him the Recompense of devout and faithful and grateful hearts, and to strive to do His Will and follow His Example in all things; lest He have Suffered for us in vain, and in vain have Striven to Bring us into a State of Salvation.

And a certain Scribe came, and said unto Him, “MASTER! I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou Goest.” And JESUS Saith unto him, “The foxes have holes, and the birds of the Air have nests; but The SON of Man hath not where to Lay His Head.”—19, 20.

Here is an instance of one believing Scribe amongst the many proud and contemptuous Ones of that Profession; and he, it seems, received the Imparted Word with gladness and singleness of heart; pledging himself to follow The Heavenly PREACHER in His Ways of Righteousness and Holiness and Mercy: and it is not unfair to conclude (since Christian Charity is led to hope the best,) that he fulfilled his pledge, notwithstanding the Discouragement Thrown in the way of his resolution by the representation of CHRIST'S Poverty, and peculiar State of Destitution,—a State, the abjectness of Which is most truly and forcibly figured by a comparison with that even of the wild and persecuted beasts and

birds of our system, and which have places where to repose themselves; whereas CHRIST, though The SOVEREIGN of the World, as GOD, yet as Man, a voluntary Exile from His Maternal Home, that He might Do His HEAVENLY FATHER'S Will: HE, Who Created both the foxes and birds, the Earth and Air and Water, and the several Inhabitants thereof in all their Generations, and Who Descended from the Blissful Mansions of Heaven to a sensual and a faithless World, to Save Man from Everlasting Destruction, was not Afforded by Man, when Sent on His Great and Gracious Mission, a Place wherein to Make His permanent Habitation, nor a Couch even whereon to rest His Body.

St. Luke's narrative is thus: *And it came to pass, that, as They went in the way, a certain Man said unto Him, (JESUS,) "LORD, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou Goest."* And JESUS Said unto him, "*Foxes have holes, and birds of the Air have nests; but The SON of Man hath not where to Lay His Head.*"—Luke ix, 57, 58.

And Another of His Disciples said unto Him, "LORD, Suffer me first to go and bury my Father!"—21. 

How short and weak, but wilfully so, is that intellectual sight, which can withdraw itself from the immediate view and contemplation of Eternal Things, and the opportunity of commanding the goodly prospect of the Happiness Thereof, directing its attention to the unnecessary and unimportant concerns of a temporal nature! How often, however, are we living Evidences of this Human weakness and folly, deferring till an imagined or assumed more convenient season the great Concerns of our Immortal State. May we strive to rise superior to such littleness, and when and where the Word of GOD, or the Promptings of His SPIRIT may Call us to act, at once enter upon the Glorious Task, and not decline It in deference to the dead and unprofitable works of the Flesh, lest we be numbered with the Dead in Spirit, and find ourselves left out amongst the Followers of Him, Who Alone Leadeth unto Life Eternal! For what is the care of a lifeless and corrupting Body, when contrasted with the Salvation of a never-dying Soul? Not that the charities and decencies of life are to be neglected; but they are obviously of a very secondary rank, and should ever give way to the instant and pressing Calls and Invitation of our Gracious SAVIOUR to His Service, and to the following of His Steps: the fear and the love of GOD being the First and Great Commandment: though the love of our Neighbours, which includes all the kindly and respectful offices we can render our Fellow-Mortals, subserviently to the Will and Work of GOD, is a duty of DIVINE Appointment in a subordinate degree.

St. Luke thus describes the Dialogue: *And He (JESUS) Said unto Another, "Follow Me!" But he said, "LORD, Suffer me first to go and bury my Father!"*—Chap. ix, 59.

But JESUS Said unto him, "Follow Me! and let the Dead bury their Dead!"—22.

The SON of Man Came to Save the Souls of Men; and it was meet, therefore, that so Gracious a Work should not be Suspended for a mere ceremonial attention to a Body, from which the Spirit had departed. HE, therefore, Bade the Disciple, if indeed he meant to be One in spirit, and to do his HEAVENLY FATHER'S Will, to follow without delay or the least loss of the precious moments, that remained to him. That GUIDE, Who could Alone Lead him from death unto Eternal Life; and Teach him the great Lesson of contributing to the Salvation of Others both by example and precept: leaving Those, who were

dead to the influence of This Grace, and wilfully deaf to the Doctrine Taught by The TEACHER of all Righteousness, to bury themselves in the life-destroying and Soul-impooverishing pursuits of this World.

St. Luke thus continues his narrative: *JESUS Said unto him, "Let the Dead bury their Dead! But go thou, and preach the Kingdom of GOD!" And Another also said, "LORD, I will follow Thee; but let me first go bid Them fare-well, which are at home at my house!" And JESUS Said unto him, "No Man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of GOD!"*—Chap. ix, 60 to 62. A Call to preach the Acceptable Year of The LORD by the Coming of His Kingdom into the hearts of His People, should be met by so full a flow of gratitude and exultation as to prompt to the most ready and willing obedience: and That Great Work, once engaged in, should be perseveringly pursued paramountly to all other objects of Life. The entering upon it with divided feelings of attachment between this World and the Next, and still more the deserting the holy Cause, when once embarked in it, and that for secular purposes, is virtually to deny The LORD, Who Bought us, and to set at nought the Riches of His Grace and the Dignity of His Service. Yet Brotherly love may continue, if the love to CHRIST be pre-eminent, and the spreading the Doctrine of Salvation, through faith in Him, is the best exemplification of love to our Fellow-Creatures.

△ And when He (JESUS) was Entered into a ship, His Disciples followed Him: and, behold, there arose a great tempest in the Sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but He was Asleep. And His Disciples came to Him, and awoke Him, saying, "LORD, Save us, we perish!" And He Saith unto them, "Why are ye fearful? O ye of little faith!" Then He Arose, and Rebuked the Winds and the Sea; and there was a great calm! But the Men marvelled, saying, "What manner of Man is This, that even the Winds and the Sea obey Him?"—23 to 27.

Amidst all the storms of Life, the Soul, that hath The HOLY SPIRIT Dwelling in it, can sleep and be at peace, reposing in that anchorage of Hope, which is Sheltered by The ROCK of Salvation; and That ROCK is CHRIST. And amidst the most fearful apprehensions, if That be laid hold on, the tempests, however great, may arise, and the ship we sail in through the voyage of Life may be filling with the waves of the Sea of trouble, but that Anchorage will Enable us to ride out the storm; and The GOD, Who Made the Winds and the Sea, and Whose Voice they implicitly obey, will Bring us Safely at the last to the desired Haven. May we, therefore, put our whole trust in GOD, and reverently fear, and highly honour Him, and never give up our faith in His Providential Care, and in His Gracious Promises; though such dangers may beset as may seem to involve the inevitable destruction of the Body, remembering that they cannot affect the Soul, if that be in The DIVINE Keeping. That the very Disciples of JESUS should thus give way to alarm, when they had so recently witnessed the Mighty Works Done by their MASTER, and saw Him Wrapt in peaceful slumbers, though all around was strife and alarm, is a proof of the extreme weakness of Human Nature in the absence of vital faith! But it is even still more extraordinary, that on the tempest's instantly ceasing at the Bidding of JESUS, they should question among themselves "What manner of *Man* He was?" and should not at once have acknowledged Him as GOD Incarnate, The True and Long-Expected MESSIAH. We, who own the Omnipotence of GOD, and that He neither Slumbereth, nor Sleepeth, may, with the most implicit confidence, rely on Him, as both Able and Willing to Save: and may fully assure ourselves, that, if troubles present themselves in our way, they will sooner or later yield to His Mandate, Who will Graciously Command

Deliverances: nor should we be too eager to terminate such troubles as arise from any other cause than a consciousness of our continuance in sin, and our want of a hearty repentance for all wherein we have done amiss, since they may be Sent or Permitted by The AUTHOR of all Wisdom and Goodness, as trials of the vitality of our faith, as instruments to wean us from the love of this World, or as Chastisements Administered in Mercy here, to Save us from Everlasting Punishment hereafter.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *The same day, when the even was come, He (JESUS) Saith unto Them, (His Disciples,) "Let us pass over unto the other side!" And when they had sent away the Multitude, they took Him even as He was in the ship: and there were also with Him other little ships: and there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. And He was in the hinder part of the ship Asleep on a pillow: and they awake Him, and say unto Him, "MASTER! Carest Thou not that we perish?" And He Arose and Rebuked the Wind, and Said unto the Sea, "Peace, be still!" And the Wind ceased, and there was a great calm. And He Said unto them, "Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?" And they feared exceedingly, and said One to Another, "What manner of Man is This, that even the Wind and the Sea obey Him?"—Mark iv, 35 to 41.*

St. Luke's account is as follows: *Now it came to pass, on a certain day, that He (JESUS) Went into a ship with His Disciples; and He Said unto them, "Let us go over unto the other side of the Lake!" And they launched forth: but as They sailed He Fell Asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the Lake: and they were filled with water, and were in jeopardy: and they came to Him and awoke Him, saying, "MASTER! MASTER! we perish!" Then He Arose, and Rebuked the Wind and the raging of the Water; and they ceased; and there was a calm! And He Said unto them, "Where is your faith?" And they, being afraid, wondered, saying One to Another, "What manner of Man is This: for He Commandeth even the Winds and Water; and they obey Him?"—Luke viii, 22 to 25.*

From the memories of the Disciples could not have passed the avowal of David in his pious address to JEHIOVAH: *O LORD GOD of Hosts! Who is A Strong LORD like unto Thee? or to Thy Faithfulness round about Thee? THOU Rulest the raging of the Sea: when the waves thereof arise, Thou Stillest them.*—Ps. lxxxix, 8, 9. Yet where was their faith, that they did not at once acknowledge, in this instance of Rule over Winds and Waves, a Power infinitely beyond Man's, even That of A Present GOD in Man? Even The SAME, Who *Maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still.*—Ps. cvii, 29.

And when He was Come to the other side, into the Country of the Gergesenes, there met Him Two possessed with Devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no Man might pass by that way. And, behold, they cried out, saying, "What have we to do with Thee, JESUS, Thou SON of GOD? Art Thou Come hither to Torment us before the time?" And there was a good way off from them an herd of many swine feeding: so the Devils besought Him, saying, "If Thou Cast us out, Suffer us to go away into the herd of swine!" And He Said unto them, "Go!" And when they were come out, they went into the herd of swine: and, behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the Sea, and perished in the waters. And they, that kept them, fled, and went their ways into the City, and told everything, and what was befallen to the Possessed of the Devils. And, behold, the whole City came out to meet JESUS: and when they saw Him, they besought Him that He would Depart out of their Coasts.—28 to 34.

How flinty and obdurate must have been the hearts of these miserable People! to think the Restoration of two Fellow-Creatures, from the extreme of furious madness and terrifying violence, to the possession of perfect sanity and



sobriety and peacefulness, dearly purchased at the sacrifice of swine. To Cleanse the Immortal Soul from such pollution, and to Make it the Temple of The HOLY GHOST, as Evinc'd by this Wondrous Act of our SAVIOUR, virtually offered the Truest and most Comprehensive Blessings to All, who had faith to receive Him in grateful acknowledgment as The Promised MESSENGER of Everlasting Peace and Spiritual Joy. Doubtless our Gracious SAVIOUR Proposed to Take out the evil of sin from every heart by Baptism on repentance, and to Guide them in the ways of Purity and Holiness; and He Demonstrated His Ability to Do so by This Signal Exercise of a Power, nothing Short of Almighty, and for the most Merciful and Benevolent Purpose: but so deeply rooted in sensuality and worldly and carnal affections were His Auditors, and those, whom the Tidings of Salvation had Reached, (though the open acknowledgment of JESUS as GOD, which the Devils had made in their hearing,) that they rejected the Gracious Offer, and so far from urging CHRIST to Remain among them, even besought Him to Leave their Country!!! Yet too nearly does this conduct of the self-inimical Gergesenes resemble that of Many, to whom the Word and the Grace of GOD are daily and hourly Offered; and who unhesitatingly reject so Inestimable a Treasure, and will none of It; and that with even less of extenuation than these unlettered Barbarians, on whom the Light of Heavenly Power and Righteousness then for the first time, perhaps, Flashed, whilst upon us That Light Shineth in the Fulness of Its Meridian Brightness; yet we but in too many instances neglect, if we do not, like too many Others, refuse to walk by Its Light. The Rejection of The SAVIOUR of the World has been the weakness, the infatuation and the disgrace of every Age and every Generation of the World. But most surprisingly and awfully was it so by the People Chosen of GOD, as the Depositories of His Laws, and as the Nation from which That SAVIOUR Himself, in His Mortal Nature, was almost from the Creation of the World Foretold, should Arise, and did eventually Forthcome.

St. Mark's Narrative is deeply interesting, for though it names but one Person as the Object of the Miracle, it continues the history of that Individual in a way peculiarly impressive, and decisive of the Piety that became the Inmate of that Heart, from the possession of which the Devils had been Driven: *And They (JESUS and His Disciples,) came over unto the other side of the Sea, into the Country of the Gadarenes: and when He was Come out of the ship, immediately there met Him out of the tombs a Man with an unclean Spirit, who had his dwelling among the tombs: and no Man could bind him, no, not with chains; because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains; and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces; neither could any Man tame him: and always night and day he was in the mountains and in the tombs crying and cutting himself with stones. But when he saw JESUS afar off, he ran and worshipped Him; and cried with a loud voice, and said, "What have I to do with Thee, JESUS, Thou SON of THE MOST HIGH GOD? I adjure Thee by GOD, that Thou Torment me not!" For He Said unto him, "Come out of the Man, thou unclean Spirit!" And He Asked him, "What is thy name?" And he answered, saying, "My name is Legion; for we are many." And he besought Him much, that He would not Send them away out of the Country. Now there was there, nigh unto the mountains, a great herd of swine feeding: and all the Devils besought Him, saying, "Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them!" And forthwith JESUS Gave them Leave. And the unclean Spirits went out, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the Sea, (they were about two thousand,) and were choked in the Sea. And they, that fed the swine, fled, and told it in the City, and in the Country: and they went out to see*

*What it was that was Done. And they come to JESUS, and see him that was possessed with the Devil and had the Legion, sitting and clothed and in his right mind: and they were afraid. And they, that saw it, told them how it befell to him, that was possessed with the Devil, and also concerning the swine. And they began to pray Him to Depart out of their Coasts. And when He was Come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the Devil, prayed Him that he might be with Him. Howbeit, JESUS Suffered him not, but Saith unto him, "Go home to thy Friends, and tell them how Great Things The LORD hath Done for thee; and hath Had Compassion on thee!" And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how Great Things JESUS had Done for him: and all Men did marvel.—Mark v, 1 to 20.*

St. Luke follows most closely the narrative of St. Mark: *And They (JESUS and His Disciples) Arrived at the Country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee. And when He went forth to land, there met Him out of the City a certain Man, which had Devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in any house, but in the tombs. When he saw JESUS, he cried out, and fell down before Him, and, with a loud voice, said, "Whut have I to do with Thee, JESUS, Thou SON of GOD MOST HIGH? I beseech Thee, Torment me not!" (For He had Commanded the unclean Spirit to come out of the Man: for oftentimes it had caught him; and he was kept bound with chains and in fetters: and he brake the bands, and was driven of the Devil into the wilderness:.) And JESUS Asked him, Saying, "What is thy name?" And he said, "Legion;" because many Devils were entered into him: and they besought Him that He would not Command them to go out into the deep! And there was there an herd of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they besought Him that He would Suffer them to enter into them: and He Suffered them. Then went the Devils out of the Man, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the Lake, and were choked. When they, that fed them, saw What was Done, they fled, and went and told it in the City and in the Country. Then they went out to see What was Done; and came to JESUS, and found the Man, out of whom the Devils were departed, sitting at the Feet of JESUS, clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid. They also, which saw it, told them by what Means he, that was possessed of the Devils, was Healed. Then the whole Multitude of the Country of the Gadarenes round about, besought Him to Depart from them: for they were taken with great fear: and He Went up into the ship; and Returned back again. Now the Man, out of whom the Devils were departed, besought Him, that he might be with Him; but JESUS Sent him away, Saying, "Return to thine own house, and shew how Great Things GOD hath Done unto thee!" And he went his way, and published throughout the whole City how Great Things JESUS had Done unto him.—Luke viii, 26 to 39.*

By the Mosaic Law, the swine was declared to be an unclean beast, and the Jews were, therefore, forbidden to eat of it.—Deut. xiv, 8. And it was amongst the many causes of Complaint, which The ALMIGHTY Brought against the Israelites, that they sacrificed in gardens, and remained among the graves, and lodged in the monuments, which ate swine's flesh, and had in their vessels broth of abominable things, in direct defiance of that Law, and yet they said to Others, "Stand by thyself, came not near to me! for I am holier than thou."—Isa. lxy, 3 to 5.

Both in prosperity and in adversity there is danger of the Worldly-minded urging A GOD of Purity and Holiness to Depart from them. Such was the character given by Job of the Prosperous in his day, who, unmindful of The SOURCE of their Blessings, yet madly said unto GOD, Depart from us! for we desire not the knowledge of Thy Ways. What is The ALMIGHTY, that we

*should serve Him? and what profit should we have, if we pray unto Him?—Job xxi, 14, 15. And again, where Eliphaz, in his unjust interpretation of the Patriarch, says, Hast thou marked the old way, which wicked Men have trodden? which were cut down out of time; whose foundation was overflowed with a flood; which said unto GOD, Depart from us!—Job xxii, 15 to 17.*


△ CHAP. ix.—And He (JESUS) Entered into a ship, and Passed over, and Came into His Own City: and, behold, they brought to Him a Man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed. And JESUS, Seeing their Faith, Said unto the Sick of the palsy, “Son, be of good cheer! thy sins be Forgiven thee.”—1, 2.

Generally speaking, as JESUS had Himself Declared, *a Prophet is not without honour, save in his own Country and amongst his own Kinsfolk.* But how unwise and Self-blinding by prejudice is such a rejection of the Home Proffered Mercies and Goodness and Guidance of GOD, so Peculiarly Vouchsafed by the Visitation of His Particular Providence and Grace. Thus JESUS, Who Did not many Things in Galilee, because of their unbelief, Left it, and Performed His Principal Miracles elsewhere. Yet, unwilling as His Kinsfolk in the Flesh were, in the first instance, to own Him as The MESSIAH, the praise of Him, that reached them from neighbouring Provinces, forced them to acknowledge His Supernatural Power; and such acknowledgment drew from Him, in the Spirit of Compassion That was Inseparable from Him, the Exertion of His Healing Power: for on their bringing to Him a Sufferer from palsy, Knowing that they were actuated at the time by a belief in His Power, He Ministered the Consolation they sought; in no degree Casting back on them any Reflection or Rebuke for the previous rejection of Him from their presence. But to Prove that He was The True PHYSICIAN of Souls, as well as The BEARER of Healing on His Wings to the bodies of the Faithful, He, Perceiving that the sick Man was sorrowing for his sins, and no doubt heartily repenting of them, from the Depth of DIVINE Mercy Poured forth Forgiveness, and the Fruit thereof, the unspeakable Consolation of DIVINE Acceptance; Thereby Conferring a Blessing infinitely more Important than a relief from bodily suffering, inasmuch as the Soul is Immortal, and will thereby be Rendered Eternally Happy; whereas the Body, at the utmost span of Life, is but of short continuance, and hasteneth to the grave, where sickness can no longer affect it, where the Wicked cease from troubling, and the Weary are at rest. And Oh, who, that had a right faith in CHRIST as his SAVIOUR, would not endure, and that patiently, if not gladly, palsy and every species and accumulation and complication of disorder through the longest life, when deeply penetrated with the assurance that, at the close of it, Everlasting Joys awaited his Soul, as the fruit of that Faith, and the Crown of that Patience! And ever may we bear in mind, that this Spiritual Medicine and Gracious Healing are Freely Offered by The Same MIGHTY ONE to Save, unto each of us, if we cherish the like spirit of belief in Him.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And again, He (JESUS) Entered into Capernaum after some days; and it was noised that He was in the house: and straightway Many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive them; no, not so much as about the door: and He Preached the Word unto them. And they come unto Him, bringing One sick of the palsy, which was borne of Four: and when they could not come nigh unto Him for the press, they uncovered the roof where He was; and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed, wherein the Sick of the palsy lay. When JESUS Saw their faith, He Said unto the Sick of the palsy, “Son, thy sins be Forgiven thee!”—Chap. ii, 1 to 5.*

St. Luke thus relates the Miracle: *Behold, Men brought in a bed a Man, which was taken with a palsy: and they sought means to bring him in, and to lay*

*him before Him. And when they could not find by what way they might bring him in, because of the Multitude, they went upon the house-top, and let him down through the tiling with his couch into the midst before JESUS. And when He Saw their faith, He Said unto him, "Man, thy sins are Forgiven thee."*—Chap. v, 18 to 20.

And, Behold, Certain of the Scribes said within themselves, "This Man blasphemeth!" And JESUS, Knowing their thoughts, Said, "Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?"—3, 4. 

The Proud, the Haughty, the Righteous in their own esteem, then followed JESUS only to find fault with His Words, and to set at nought His Works, as the same Spirit in these our days only hear or read His Word, and the Record of His Works, to treat Them with scorn and to oppose Their Influence, and to charge His Doctrine and Mission with error or folly. But may such perverse and wicked devices be far from us, and may not such sin be ever laid to our charge! and, remembering that the Penetrating Mind of The MOST HIGH is ever Acquainted with our thoughts, and with the most unacknowledged workings of our hearts, may we so strive to order them at all times, as a consciousness of His Immediate Presence would dictate, individually adopting from the heart the pious utterances of the holy Psalmist, where he says, *O LORD, Thou hast Searched me, and Known me: Thou Understandest my thoughts afar off!* [Ps. cxxxix, 1. 2.] and retaining ever the confidence that The LORD, Whom David thus addressed, was The Same LORD, Whom the supercilious Scribes thus charged in their thoughts with blasphemy.

St. Mark's continuation of the narrative is thus: *But there were Certain of the Scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, "Why doth this Man thus speak blasphemies? Who can Forgive sins, but GOD only?"*—Chap. ii, 6, 7.

St. Luke's as follows: *And the Scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, "Who is this, which speaketh blasphemies? Who can Forgive sins, but GOD Alone?"*—Chap. v, 21.

Thus individually bearing testimony to The DIVINITY of JESUS: since His Very Office was to Work out the Salvation of penitent and believing Sinners from the Punishment due to their sins, by His Own Voluntary Sacrifice of Himself on their behalf.

"For whether is easier to say, 'Thy sins be Forgiven thee!' or to say, 'Arise and walk!'" —5.

The Power That could, in the twinkling of an eye, Give Strength and Vigour to a Body, being weakened with a violent and lingering disease, could not be but from Above; and why, therefore, but through pride and contumacy, should Any doubt that the Power of Forgiving sins might be Possessed by The Same Divinely-Gifted BEING? Steeped as were these Scribes and Pharisees in prejudice and in jealousy, lest their own power and influence should fall before Those of JESUS, they meditated not on the possibility of such Power, as He Manifested, Coming from Above; and waited not to see, if such Gracious Dispensations were at length Visited upon them and their People from On HIGH; but at once deliberated in their own minds on the only probable ground of successful opposition to Him with the People, that of charging Him with blasphemy. This Assertion of DIVINE Power in JESUS was indeed an Unequivocal Assertion of The DIVINITY of His Nature: and His bitterest Enemies thus admitted, that, if He could Forgive sins, He must be GOD.

St. Mark's continuation is thus: *And immediately when JESUS Perceived in His Spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, He Said unto them, "Why reason ye these things in your hearts? Whether is it easier to say to the Sick of the*

*palsy, 'Thy sins be Forgiven thee!' or to say, 'Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?'—Chap. ii, 8, 9.*

St. Luke thus proceeds: *But when JESUS Perceived their thoughts, He, Answering, Said unto them, "What reason ye in your hearts? Whether is easier to say, 'Thy sins be Forgiven thee!' or to say, 'Rise up and walk?'"—Chap. v, 22, 23.*

"But that ye may know that The SON of Man hath Power on Earth to Forgive sins," then Saith He to the Sick of the Palsy, "Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house!"—6.

O faithless and perverse Generation, who, though professing to be seeking Signs from Heaven, would not believe Them, when Given! For abundance of Signs had shewn a Supernatural Power in JESUS, and from the tendency of the Exercises of That Power, as Leaning to Mercy and Good-will towards Mankind, there should have been a grateful and respectful feeling towards Him cherished, and a patient awaiting a further Development of Qualities, and an encouragement of the hope, that The ALMIGHTY had at length Visited to Redeem His People: that the Time was at length Come, when, according to the Inspired Words from the Prophet Micah, *That GOD, unto Whom None was like, Who Pardoneth iniquity, and Passeth by the transgression of the Remnant of His Heritage*, had Descended Visibly among them: Even He, *Who Retaineth not His Anger for ever, because He Delighteth in Mercy: Who will have Compassion upon us, and Subdue our iniquities, and will Cast all our sins into the depths of the Sea.*—Chap. vii, 18, 19.

St. Mark's continuation is thus: "*But that ye may know that The SON of Man hath Power on Earth to Forgive sins,*" *He Saith to the Sick of the palsy, "I Say unto thee, 'Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way unto thine house!'"—Chap. ii, 10, 11.*

St. Luke also: "*But that ye may know, that The SON of Man hath Power upon Earth to Forgive sins,*" *He Said unto the Sick of the palsy, "I say unto thee, 'Arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house!'"—Chap. v, 24.*

And he arose and departed to his house.—7.

Thus proving a living monument of CHRIST'S Omnipotence both over the Souls and Bodies of Men, by Imparting health and vigour to the latter, and Implanting obedience as the fruit of Forgiveness of sins, in the former.

St. Mark adds: *And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all.*—Chap. ii, 12.

St. Luke's continuation is thus: *And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that, whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, glorifying GOD.*—Chap. v, 25. This testimony of the grateful piety of the Object of CHRIST'S twofold Compassion, is a further proof that our SAVIOUR Looked upon his heart, and Found therein that faith, which worketh by love.

But when the Multitude saw it, they marvelled, and glorified GOD, Which had Given such power unto Men.—8.

To minds, unblinded by prejudice, but one sentiment could arise on Such a Manifestation of DIVINE Power and Goodness. The Multitudes naturally thought that though the Power was of DIVINE Origin, yet that It was only Imparted to CHRIST from The FATHER of Spirits. For JESUS had not then Revealed Himself to the Multitude as Very GOD, as well as Very Man: still the pious spirit that emanated from them, should equally have issued from the

Scribes and Pharisees, when calmly contemplating the Goodness with which the Exercise of that Power was Crowned: and would have so done, had their hearts been single and right with GOD.

St. Mark's conclusion is thus: *Insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified GOD, saying, "We never saw it on this fashion!"*—Chap. ii, 12.

St. Luke's as follows: *And they were all amazed, and they glorified GOD, and were filled with fear, saying, "We have seen strange things to day!"*—Chap. v, 26.

And as JESUS Passed forth from thence, He Saw a Man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of Custom; and He Saith unto him, "Follow Me!" And he arose and followed Him.—9. △

The Call to be an Apostle of The Blessed JESUS, though the most Distinguished Favour That could be Conferred by GOD on Man, was, in the letter, confined mostly to the Period of CHRIST'S Appearance upon Earth; still, as in SPIRIT, CHRIST is continually with His Church, so He still Calleth Such to be distinguished Ministers and Supporters of It, who, He Knows, will be faithful to their trust, and serve Him with singleness of heart; and upon whom the Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT is ever actively Operating to the Enabling them to fulfil the duties of their high and glorious Calling. Thus Election and Grace were Manifested in St. Matthew, who, notwithstanding the discouragement of his station and occupation to thoughts even of Religion, had a heart predisposed to the Service of GOD; and, by the influence of Grace powerfully Aiding that predisposition, was Elected to be an Apostle, as CHRIST, by His Foreknowledge, had, doubtless, Pre-Ordained: and the manner of his fulfilling his Apostleship, evidenced the Propriety of the Choice; for he was faithful unto the end. That GOD is no Respector of Persons was forcibly demonstrated in the Selection of the Apostles: and hence, as a lesson of instruction, may be gathered what to humble and pious Minds inward sensation will sooner or later confirm, that GOD'S Grace is Sufficient for all things, and that It freely and fully Shines upon All, who will not shut their eyes against Its Guiding and Animating Light; but are willing and desirous to follow whithersoever It Leads them.

St Mark's narrative is thus: *And He (JESUS) Went forth again by the Sea-side: and all the Multitude resorted unto Him, and He Taught them. And as He Passed by, He Saw Levi, the Son of Alpheus, sitting at the receipt of Custom, and Said unto Him, "Follow Me!" And he arose, and followed Him.*—Chap. ii, 13, 14.

This Spirit of Teaching, which our Blessed SAVIOUR so Graciously Put forth on every fitting occasion, must have been Profitable for Reproof and for Exhortation, not only to those, who heard the Discourses, but traditionally through them to many of their Families, Friends, and Neighbours, though the Particulars of Such Discourses have not formed Part of our Scriptural Treasury.

St. Luke's account is as follows: *And after these things He (JESUS) Went forth, and Saw a Publican named Levi, sitting at the receipt of Custom; and He Said unto him, "Follow Me!" And he left all, rose up, and followed Him.*—Chap. v, 27, 28.

And it came to pass, as JESUS Sat at meat in the house, behold, many Publicans and Sinners came and sat down with Him and His Disciples.—10.

What an instructive Lesson does this afford us for our dealings with our Fellow-Creatures, Shewing us that we should not confine our attentions or exertions to Persons moving in our own sphere, or concurring in our own pur-

suits of life, but extend them occasionally to Others, and those even of principles and of practices most opposite and offensive to us; so long as there is any reasonable hope of doing good thereby: For the Blessed JESUS, The Very GOD, so Humbled Himself as not only to Take our Nature upon Him, but thus Associated occasionally with Publicans and Sinners, that by the Character and Attraction of His Conversation, as well as by His Preaching, He might Bring Some of them to serious reflection, and repentance, and from thence to faith and Salvation. And often did He Find more Success attending His Benevolent Efforts, when Directed towards Such apparently unpromising Objects, than when Addressed to the Self-righteous and Self-satisfied Scribes and Pharisees: Declaring that Publicans and Harlots go into the KINGDOM of HEAVEN, rather than they.

△ And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto His Disciples, “Why eateth your Master with Publicans and Sinners?”—11.

Thus in all ways did the envious and haughty Pharisees persecute the Gracious MESSIAH, Who Came avowedly to Call Sinners to repentance; opposing His Practice, misconstruing His Motives, and striving even to turn Him from His Purposes of Mercy, and to set even His Disciples against Him: at times accusing Him of having a Devil, and only casting out Devils by Beelzebub, the Prince of Devils: at other times, as on this occasion, virtually giving Him credit for purity and intended righteousness, but attempting to prevent their influence over the minds of those He was Eating with, by reprehending Him for associating with Persons of immoral and profligate character, and thence insinuating that the Discernment of The DIVINE Mind could not be in Him.

St. Luke's narrative is thus: *Then drew near unto Him (JESUS) all the Publicans and Sinners for to hear Him: and the Pharisees and Scribes murmured, saying, “This Man receiveth Sinners, and eateth with them.”*—Chap. xv, 1, 2.

The Impulse, That Led our SAVIOUR to Teach Sinners the Way of Salvation, prompted His Disciples to seek, by all means and appropriate associations, to recover Others from the grasp and subtlety of Satan: and such should be the aim of every Minister of the Gospel, who, as the Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews beautifully suggests, *should have compassion on the Ignorant, and on Them, that are out of the Way.*—Heb. v, 2.

St. Mark's account is as follows: *And it came to pass, that, as JESUS Sat at meat in his (Levi's or Matthew's) house, many Publicans and Sinners Sat also together with JESUS and His Disciples; for they were Many; and they followed Him. And when the Scribes and Pharisees saw Him Eat with Publicans and Sinners, they said unto His Disciples, “How is it that He eateth and drinketh with Publicans and Sinners?”*—Chap. ii, 15, 16.

But when JESUS Heard that, He Said unto them, “They, that be whole, need not a Physician; but they that are sick.”—12.

How Accordant was This Answer with the Wisdom and Goodness of Its GIVER! The force of the Observation must have been powerfully and poignantly felt by those, to whom it was Addressed; the Justice of It was indisputable: Its Agreement with the Merciful Character and Avowed Intentions of JESUS was obvious: Its Rebuke of them, who, though asserting, for worldly purposes, their own merits and righteousness, could not but inwardly be conscious of their want of a Physician to their sickly Souls and uncharitable Spirits, must have touched keenly their sensibility: but still their pride was not subdued; for no outward confession and acknowledged disposition towards further teachableness mani-

fested themselves: and though they were unable to reply to the Reasoning, yet did they not call for the Balm of DIVINE Council, to be Administered to them also, Which would have Expelled the pride of their understandings, and Removed the disordering influences of their prejudices; and Which The SAVIOUR of Souls was not less Willing than Able to Dispense, had He been but meekly asked to Do so.

“But go, ye, and learn, What That Meaneth, ‘I will Have Mercy, and not Sacrifice!’ for I am not Come to Call the Righteous, but Sinners, to repentance.”—13.

CHRIST, however, having more Mercy for them, than they for themselves, Gives them, on their retiring in silence, (confounded, doubtless, by His Wisdom,) unanswerable Reasoning, Drawn from the very Scriptures on Which they professed to found their faith. The Prophet Hosea’s Writings were referred to, where, in the same Spirit of desire to pour counsel and consolation to the Wanderers from the Paths of Righteousness, he says, *Come, and let us return unto The LORD; for He hath Torn; and He will Heal us: He hath Smitten; and He will Bind us up! We shall know, if we follow on to know The LORD, His Going forth is Prepared as the morning; and He shall Come unto us as the Rain, as the latter and former Rain unto the Earth!* And after Remonstrating with Ephraim and with Judah for the fleeting nature of their proffered piety, The ALMIGHTY, by his Prophet, thus Declared Himself, *“I Desired Mercy, and not Sacrifice; and the knowledge of GOD, more than burnt Offerings!”*—Chap. vi, 1. 3. 6. So by the Prophet Micah it was Asked from The FOUNTAIN of Wisdom and Truth Itself, *What doth The LORD Require, but that we should do justly and love Mercy, and walk humbly with our GOD?*—Chap. vi, 8. Thus do we gather that, amidst the observance of the ceremonial part of the Law, an equal or a higher attention was to be paid to its Spirituality. From the Text we learn that the Call to repentance, and the Promise Made thereon of Salvation, was Addressed to All, for that All have sinned: and it is scarcely questionable (as has been before observed) that the Pharisees so understood it, since they offered no justification of themselves from the indirect Accusation against them, which this Admonition of JESUS Contained. And we have the authority of the Gentile Apostle, confirming this Description by CHRIST Himself of the Merciful Object of His Mission: *This is a faithful Saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that CHRIST JESUS Came into the World to Save Sinners.* 1 Tim. i, 15. Let us, therefore, individually, look narrowly and without prejudice into our past Lives, weighing our thoughts, words, and deeds, and all that we have left undone, in their origin, motive, and immediate and remote effects, as well as we are able, and we shall then find how unrighteous we must appear in the Sight of an All-Perfect and Holy GOD; and that from the extent of our sinfulness, we should be sick unto death eternal, had we no Righteousness of CHRIST Interposed, in DIVINE Mercy, on our behalf. To Him, therefore, and His Graciously Atoning and Healing and Purifying Influences, should we flee for Succour now in the time of this mortal Life, and whilst it is called “To-day;” lest on the morrow, amidst the ever uncertainty of its approach, Death come upon us, and the last Day pass upon us, and find us, amidst the nakedness of our own righteousness, no longer possessing our Self-approval; but destitute alike of merit and of hope, and our former false estimate of Ourselves proving the chief source of our Self-condemnation, when repentance thereof will be too late. Let us, with all the seriousness and consistency in our power, shun that confidence in Self-deservings, which would lead us, like the Spiritually proud Scribes and Pharisees, to reject the Counsel of The MOST HIGH, and to set at nought the



Wisdom of His Blessed SON, and to think that we need not the Aid of That PHYSICIAN of Souls.

St. Mark's narrative of these two associated Texts, is thus: *When JESUS Heard it, He Saith unto them, "They, that are whole, have no need of the Physician; but they, that are sick: I Came not to Call the Righteous, but Sinners to repentance."*—Chap. ii, 17.

St. Luke's account is almost in the same words: *And JESUS Answering, Said unto them, "They, that are whole, need not a Physician; but they, that are sick: I Came not to Call the Righteous, but Sinners to repentance."*—Chap. v, 31, 32.

What our SAVIOUR thus Exemplarily Urged at the Outset of His Ministry, He Confirmed, at Its Close, even after His Resurrection, when He Injoined the Same Doctrine of *Repentance and Remission of sins to be preached in His Name among all Nations*.—Luke xxiv, 47. For as the Apostle Peter afterwards declared: *The LORD is Long-Suffering to us-ward, not Willing that Any should perish, but that All should come to repentance*.—2 Peter iii, 9.

△ Then came to Him (JESUS) the Disciples of John, saying, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft; but Thy Disciples fast not?"—14.

John, the Forerunner of CHRIST, by abstinence and prayer, paved the way for repentance, as introductory to the Advent of Salvation: and as hope is swallowed up in fruition, so did the same rigid system of preparation, observed by the Baptist and his Disciples, give way to the Feast of Spiritual Joy, when CHRIST Appeared Bearing Salvation in His Hand. Sorrow and mourning in a Spiritual sense were then no more; but, to Faith in its fulness, all was solemn mirth and jubilee of heart; and not a cloud obscured the Glorious and Soul-Cheering Beams of The SUN of Righteousness. The fasts of the Disciples of John were, undoubtedly, fasts in the spirit of fervent piety: but those of Pharisees were, but too generally, ostentatious and hypocritical, made to catch the applause of Men; and not in desire of the Praise of GOD: this John's Disciples had been taught by their Master, since the Pharisees had fallen under the Baptist's severest displeasure and repeated reproofs: the Disciples, therefore, when ranking themselves with such Pharisees, could only have done so with the wish to be informed from the most Direct Source, why, even in appearance, CHRIST and His Disciples Suffered Themselves to be outdone in ceremonial observances by the hollow-hearted Pharisees; more particularly in that branch of duty, which the Followers of the Baptist had been taught by their Master as indispensably necessary to repentance and Salvation.

St. Mark's Narrative is thus: *And the Disciples of John and of the Pharisees used to fast: and they come and say unto Him, (JESUS,) "Why do the Disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast; but Thy Disciples fast not?"*—Chap. ii, 18.

St. Luke also writes: *And they (the Scribes and Pharisees,) said unto Him, (JESUS,) "Why do the Disciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and likewise the Disciples of the Pharisees; but Thine eat and drink?"*—Chap. v, 33.

The main object of the inquiry was answered, whether the question was put by one Party or another: the difference, therefore, in that respect, amongst the three Evangelists is not of consequence.

And JESUS Said unto Them, "Can the Children of the Bride-Chamber mourn, as long as the BRIDEGROOM is with them? But the days will come, when the BRIDEGROOM shall be Taken from them; and then shall they fast."—15.

JESUS Knew that the Festival, which His Presence Occasioned His Disciples, would be but of short duration, though it was a Feast of the Soul, and not

of the Body: for the indescribable Sweetness of The REDEEMER'S Manner, the Truths, That Flowed from His Tongue in all the force of the Profoundest Wisdom, and with all the beauty of the Clearest Illustration, must have given a zest to the Entertainments, where He Presided, as closely to assimilate them to a Heavenly Banquet. But the Beams of Such Plenty and Peace were soon to be hid, and The SUN of Righteousness Himself to be Obscured with the clouds of Persecution, and to be Shrouded in a Storm that, for a time, should involve both Nature and Itself in darkness. The Union of GOD with Man in the Person of CHRIST JESUS, and His Marriage with the true Church on Earth, Resembles Him to a Bridegroom, surrounded with all the joys of the purest bliss: and how could the Children of the Bride-chamber mourn as long as Such A BRIDEGROOM was with them! But the Glory and the Joyfulness of His remembered Presence could not but intensely have increased the Children of the Bride-chamber's woe, when they were left to feel His Absence in the Flesh, and doubted of His Preservation in The SPIRIT, until His Resurrection from the darkness of the Grave, and His Ascension unto the Glories of Heaven. The faithful Fore-Runner of our SAVIOUR emphatically avowed himself *not* to be *The CHRIST*; but characterizing That SAVIOUR as A Bridegroom, exulted in being esteemed as His Friend; saying, *The Friend of The BRIDEGROOM, which standeth and heareth Him, rejoiceth greatly because of The BRIDEGROOM'S Voice: (adding,) this my joy therefore is fulfilled.*—John iii, 28, 29. But when JESUS, The BRIDEGROOM of His faithful Church, was Gone, then did His Disciples fast, as He Foretold they would; for Poverty, through Persecution, beset them in every way; fasting and praying were then the voluntary exercises of their piety and devotedness: and, indeed, fasting seems systematically to have preceded the office of public prayer and special intercession. [Acts xiii, 1 to 3; xiv, 21 to 23.]

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And JESUS Said unto them, "Can the Children of the Bride-chamber fast, while the BRIDEGROOM is with them? As long as they have the BRIDEGROOM with them, they cannot fast. But the days will come, when the BRIDEGROOM shall be Taken away from them; and then shall they fast in those days."*—Chap. ii, 19, 20.

St. Luke's continuation is: *And He (JESUS) Said unto them, (the Scribes and Pharisees,) "Can ye make the Children of the Bride-chamber fast, while the BRIDEGROOM is with them? But the days will come, when the BRIDEGROOM shall be Taken away from them; and then shall they fast in those days."*—Chap. v, 34, 35.

"No Man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment, for that, which is put in to fill it up, taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse: neither do Men put new wine into old bottles, else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles; and both are preserved."—16, 17.

Oh, that such wisdom, as leads to the observance of consistency in things pertaining to this Life, influenced to an observance of it in those infinitely more important Concerns, that relate to the Life to Come! that Men, in assuming to put on a Spiritual character, and to become new Creatures, would not retain the habits and propensities of the old, (since it is impossible to serve GOD and Mammon;) and that they would not attempt to preserve the Wine, that flows from the FOUNTAIN of Life, (and which The Blessed JESUS Communicated to us for the everlasting comfort and gladness of our Souls,) in vessels so broken, as a heart divided between a faint regard for religion, and a devoted fondness for the sinful pleasures of the present transitory state!

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *No Man also seweth a piece of new cloth on an old garment; else the new piece, that filled it up, taketh away from the old, and the rent is made worse: and no Man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred: but new wine must be put into new bottles.*—Chap. ii, 21, 22.

St. Luke's is thus: *And He (JESUS) Spake also a Parable unto them; "No Man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old: if otherwise, then both the new maketh a rent, and the piece, that was taken out of the new, agreeth not with the old: and no Man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish: but new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved. No Man also having drunk old wine, straightway desireth new; for he saith, 'The old is better.'*"—Chap. v, 36 to 39.

While He (JESUS) Spake these Things unto them, behold, there came a certain Ruler, and worshipped Him, saying, "My Daughter is even now dead! but Come, and Lay Thy Hand upon her! and she shall live."—18.

How great must have been this Man's faith? for hitherto the Power of JESUS to Restore the Dead to life had not been exemplified! And though the fondness of a Father might prompt a Person to suggest every thing for the preservation of a beloved Child, yet nothing short of a fulness of faith in JESUS, as The CHRIST, and as being Very GOD, could, One must imagine, have induced a Ruler of the People to fall down in the attitude of adoration to Him, and urge Him, in all the earnestness of Parental feeling, to Call back to life the departed Spirit of his Daughter: assuring himself, and making, virtually, a public assurance before the People (who would have counted him as a Madman, and unworthy of his being continued in his office as a Ruler, if he had failed,) that, by the simple Application of JESUS' Hand, his Daughter, who was admixtively all but dead, would be made to live.

The narrative by St. Mark is thus: *And, behold, there cometh one of the Rulers of the Synagogue, Jairus by name; and when he saw Him, (JESUS,) he fell at His Feet; and besought Him greatly, saying, "My little Daughter lieth at the point of death: I pray Thee, Come and Lay Thy Hands on her; that she may be Healed! and she shall live!"*—Chap. v, 22, 23.

St. Luke also thus describes it: *And, behold, there came a Man, named Jairus, and he was a Ruler of the Synagogue; and he fell down at JESUS' Feet, and besought Him, that He would Come into his house: for he had one only Daughter, about twelve years of age; and she lay a dying.*—Chap. viii, 41, 42.

On a comparison of the three statements, though there may at first seem some difference, it is fairly inferable, even from that of St. Matthew, that the Child was not actually dead at the time the Father left her, but that she was so entirely past all hope from general help, that nothing but the Extraordinary Interposition of DIVINE Power, through JESUS, could, in the Parent's mind, Rescue her from the grasp of death.

And JESUS Arose, and Followed him; and so did His Disciples.—19.

How Ready was The Benevolent JESUS to Do a Work of Mercy! Would that we were but as ready to do that, on which our everlasting Destiny may depend; and that we, like His Disciples, were eager to tread in the same Paths of Charity, in which He invariably Trod; and to follow Him with the same persevering zeal, that they did, that we might assuredly arrive at the same Goal of Perfect and never-ending Bliss with them!

St. Mark writes: *And JESUS Went with him: and much People followed Him and thronged Him.*—Chap. v, 24.

St. Luke briefly states: *But as He Went, the People thronged Him.*—Chap. viii, 42.

And, behold, a Woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind Him, and touched the hem of His Garment; for she said within herself, "If I may but touch His Garment, I shall be whole."—20, 21.

Striking and truly wonderful as these instances of faith appear, so soon after our SAVIOUR'S Entry upon His Ministry, and even before the Grace of GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT was Generally Poured out; yet still more surprising, and, indeed, alarmingly so, in the present matured age of the professed Religion of CHRIST upon Earth, is that deadness of faith, which now so unhappily and generally prevails, even in Countries calling themselves Christian: and which, notwithstanding a consciousness of an issue of Spiritual blood, which exhausts the life-organs and must terminate, if unchecked, in utter dissolution, will not come in becoming humility, even behind The Great PHYSICIAN of Souls, and touch, with reverence and devotion and in pious confidence the hem of His Spiritual Garment, for the purpose of being Healed of that fatal malady of sin, in which if we die, we must sink into everlasting wretchedness and woe in the Life to Come. It is, however, the efficacy of faith to find the Balm of Healing on every occasion of flying, as it is ever prompt to do, unto the SAVIOUR of Souls, even though we may do so invisibly to our Fellow-Mortals, and in the secret advances of inward prayer. For the true Christian knows, and doubts not to experience the Universality of DIVINE Grace, and the full Efficacy of It when Received into the Soul.

St. Mark's narrative is: *And a certain Woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years, and had suffered many things of many Physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse; when she had heard of JESUS, came in the press behind, and touched His Garment: for she said, "If I may touch but His Clothes, I shall be whole."*—Chap. v, 25 to 28.

St. Luke thus relates: *And a Woman, having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon Physicians, neither could be healed of any, came behind Him, and touched the border of His Garment.*—Chap. viii, 43, 44.

But JESUS Turned Him about: and when He Saw her, He Said, "Daughter, be of good comfort! Thy faith hath made thee whole!" And the Woman was Made whole from that hour.—22.

St. Mark's continuation of his narrative is thus: *And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was Healed of that plague. And JESUS, immediately knowing in Himself that Virtue had Gone out of Him, Turned Him about in the press, and Said, "Who touched My Clothes?" And His Disciples said unto Him, "Thou Seest the Multitude thronging Thee, and Sayest Thou, 'Who touched Me?'" And He Looked round about to See her, that had done this thing: but the Woman, fearing and trembling, knowing What was Done in her, came and fell down before Him, and told Him all the truth. And He Said unto her, "Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole: go in peace; and be whole of thy plague!"*—Chap. v, 29 to 34.

St. Luke's statement is thus: *And immediately her issue of blood stanch'd. And JESUS Said, "Who touched Me?" When All denied, Peter and they that were with him said, "MASTER, the Multitude throng Thee, and press Thee, and Sayest Thou, 'Who touched Me?'" And JESUS Said, "Somebody hath touched Me; for I Perceive that Virtue is Gone out of Me." And when the Woman saw*

*that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before Him, she declared unto Him, before all the People, for what cause she had touched Him, and how she was Healed immediately. And He Said unto her, "Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace!"*—Chap. viii, 44 to 48.

These two last narratives are more minute than the first. The Miraculous Recovery, and the faith that led to It, are manifest in each account. The Words Spoken in reply to the Woman, by The Ever Merciful JESUS, are Such as He Uttereth to All, who in spirit and in truth, in meekness and humility, come unto Him for Relief from their Spiritual infirmities: *Be of good Comfort, thy faith hath made thee whole!* And what diffusive Consolation Such Words, from Such A SOURCE, are calculated to convey to Souls Made whole, and Restored from the appalling sickness of sin to the healthfulness of a hope, that is full of a Glorious Immortality, Persons, who have suddenly recovered from a severe and lingering illness may, by comparison, have some faint, though but very faint idea of, and exemplify in their countenance of joy and animating spirits: but the benefit of the one state is, at all events, bounded by the Grave, and liable even to many intermediate interruptions—the rejoicing of the Other is lasting as Eternity, and pure as the Breath and Peace of Heaven.

△ And when JESUS Came into the Ruler's house, and Saw the Minstrels and the People making a noise, He Said unto them, "Give place! for the Maid is not dead, but sleepeth." And they laughed Him to scorn.—23, 24.

The narrative of St. Mark is thus: *While He (JESUS) yet Spake (to the Woman), there came from the Ruler of the Synagogue's house Certain, which said, "Thy Daughter is dead! Why troublest thou the Master any further?" As soon as JESUS Heard the word, that was spoken, He Saith unto the Ruler of the Synagogue, "Be not afraid, only believe!" And He Suffered no Man to follow Him save Peter, and James, and John the Brother of James, And He Cometh to the house of the Ruler of the Synagogue, and Seeth the tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly. And when He was Come in, He Saith unto them, "Why make ye this ado, and weep? the Damsel is not dead, but sleepeth!" And they laughed Him to scorn.*—Chap. v, 35 to 40.

St. Luke's continuation is thus: *While He (JESUS) yet Spake, there cometh One from the Ruler of the Synagogue's house, saying to him, "Thy Daughter is dead: trouble not the Master!" But when JESUS Heard it, He Answered him, Saying, "Fear not; believe only, and she shall be Made whole!" And when He Came into the house, He Suffered no Man to go in, save Peter and James and John, and the Father and the Mother of the Maiden: and All wept, and bewailed her. But He Said, "Weep not! she is not dead, but sleepeth." And they laughed Him to scorn; knowing that she was dead.*—Chap. viii, 49 to 53.

The Maid, though dead in the flesh, only slept in the Spirit; and The SPIRIT of GOD in CHRIST JESUS Awoke her, that so slept, and Bade her arise with her body from such state of partial dissolution. Her's was the Resurrection and the Life of the Body; whilst her Soul was Raised from its slumbers, and Restored to its peace and holy joy. May we, remembering that we are dead in trespasses and sins, and that without the Life-restoring Intercession of CHRIST we must so have continued, go unto Him in prayer-speaking faith, and seek His Healing and Resuscitating Influence with The FATHER of Mercies and GOD of all Consolation; that so, being Called to newness of Life in the Spirit, we may have our hearts renewed by the true faith and Grace of the Gospel, and may become Children of The True GOD, through the Mercy and Loving-Kindness of Him, Who, as The SON of GOD, is The True PHYSICIAN of Souls. But how lamentably true a representation is here given of the natural effects of infidelity

in the Unconverted; all humility, all reverence, and all deference towards Him, with Whom are the Issues of Life and Death, being withheld; they not only rejecting Him, but laughing Him to scorn. How awful will be the feelings and the fate of them in the Judgment to come, when the pride and arrogancy and scorn and blasphemy of Man, the Creature of an hour, against The Almighty and Eternal FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST, The ONE Indivisible JEHOVAH, will stand Self-convicted, and Self-condemned, and utterly and irretrievably confounded.

*The making a noise*, probably meant *the singing* or chanting, which usually formed part of the lamentations over the Deceased, as on the death of Josiah, not only Jeremiah, but singing Men and singing Women made lamentations.—2 Chron. xxxv, 25.

But when the People were put forth, He Went in, and Took her by the hand; and the Maid arose.—25.

And whom will not The Ever-Gracious JESUS, Who Came to Seek and to Save That Which was lost, and to Bring Life and Immortality to Light, Take in like Manner by the hand, and Spiritually Raise from the death of hope, through a sense of sin, to Newness of Life, and unto the Assurance of a Joyful Resurrection through sincere repentance, and a lively faith in His Power and Merits and Merciful Mediation?

St. Mark's narrative is thus continued: *But when He (JESUS) had Put them All out, He Taketh the Father and the Mother of the Damsel, and them, that were with Him, and Entereth in where the Damsel was lying: and He Took the Damsel by the hand, and Said unto her, "Talitha Cumi!"* which is, being interpreted, "*Damsel, I Say unto thee, Arise!*" And straightway the Damsel arose, and walked; for she was of the age of twelve years.—Chap. v, 40 to 42.


St. Luke's is thus: *And He (JESUS) Put them All out, and Took her by the hand, and Called, Saying, "Maid, arise!"* And her Spirit came again, and she arose straightway.—Chap. viii, 54, 55.

And the fame Hercof went abroad into all that Land.—26.

And the fame Thereof hath reached this our Land; and continued also unto this our day! God Grant that the Effects of This and of all other Good Tidings in the Gospel of JESUS CHRIST may Arise in our hearts, and manifest in us both reverence and thankfulness, Producing in us all godliness and Christian charity for the sake of our Immortal Souls, and for the Honour of our SAVIOUR, Whose Fame is thus, by the love and veneration of His Followers, most effectually promoted.

St. Mark thus concludes his narrative: *And they were astonished with a great astonishment: and He Charged them straitly that no Man should know It; and Commanded that something should be given her to eat.*—Chap. v, 42, 43.

St. Luke's conclusion is thus: *And He Commanded to give her meat. And her Parents were astonished: but He Charged them that they should tell no Man What was Done.*—Chap. viii, 55, 56.

And when JESUS Departed thence, two blind Men followed Him, crying and saying,  "Thou Son of David, have mercy on us!"—27.

When we shut our eyes to the Light of the Gospel, we voluntarily become Spiritually blind: we should, therefore, continually pray to GOD to Restrain us by His Especial Grace, from doing so great folly and wickedness, lest we be eternally shut out from the Light and Glory of Heaven! Amidst the conscious-

ness, however, of our own short-sightedness in Matters that belong to our Everlasting Peace, may we, in the spirit of a true faith, cry unto JESUS to Have Mercy on us, and Give us the Light of The HOLY SPIRIT! And, knowing that He is Full of the Tenderest Compassion and Loving-Kindness towards us, may we confidently trust that He will Hear and Heed our prayer! Without the Light of Revelation, Which Discloses The ROCK of our Salvation, and Diffuses the Guiding and Animating Influence of Grace, we should, indeed, in this our day of probation and of pilgrimage, be in perpetual darkness, not knowing whither we are going; but, thanks be to GOD through CHRIST JESUS, we can thus turn darkness into light, and go on our way rejoicing.

And when He was Come into the house, the blind Men came to Him: and JESUS Saith unto them, "Believe ye that I am Able to Do this?" They said unto Him, "Yea, LORD."—28.

JESUS did not immediately, it seems, Comply with their petition, but, as it were, Put the faith of these Suppliants to the test, by not even Noticing them till they had followed Him on the road, and into the house, where He had Entered. Thus it may happen to us, that only by persevering in supplication, and continuing instant in prayer, may our voice be effectually Heard: but let us not, therefore, despond or fail, under any circumstances, in looking unto and seeking JESUS to Enlighten and Comfort us! And should even the loss of natural sight be Visited upon us by seeming accident, or under the enfeebling influence of old age, may we remember that the sight of the Soul, that Spiritual Vision, which is of infinitely more value and importance than the eyes of the Body, may remain unimpaired and even improved with us; and that with the eye of Faith we may see the Bright Regions of The Host of Angels and Saints within the Courts of The Great LORD of Life and Death, and may look, in the spirit of the Christian hope, to be Partakers in that Communion, in Which will be Blessedness for evermore.

Then Touched He their eyes, Saying, "According to your faith, Be it unto you!"—29.

Thus not to every One, that saith, "LORD, LORD!" doth Salvation Extend itself; but unto Them only, that have a lively faith in GOD'S Mercy through CHRIST; and to All such, who come unto Him in meekness and humility, and earnest but devout supplication, will He, sooner or later, Say, "*According to your faith Be it unto you!*"


And their eyes were opened. And JESUS straitly Charged them, Saying, "See that no Man know It!"—30.

What a Glorious Transition from utter darkness, not only to the light of the Sun of this World, and the beauties of this our fair Creation, but to the Light and Enlightening Countenance of the SUN of Righteousness in the very Exercise of His Dispensations of Mercy! And yet how still more transcendantly Glorious will be the transition of the Faithful and Redeemed from the darkness of the grave to the Light and Life of HEAVEN in its Loveliest and Sweetest Disclosure of Itself: The SON of GOD Himself Inviting the Penitent and Believing to His Bosom. The Injunction of Silence was, as before observed, *because His Time was not yet Come.*

But they, when they were departed, spread abroad His fame in all that Country.—31.

It is not in Nature to withhold the tribute of gratitude for unmerited and distinguished and otherwise unrequited favours, even when conferred by Man on Man: much less is it in Grace to withhold thanksgiving and praise from The

DUNTAIN of Life and of every associated Bliss, more particularly when Its special Favour is so Signally Displayed, as in Restoring us from the darkness of error to the light of Truth; from the danger of irretrievable destruction to the joys of Everlasting Peace.

they went out, behold, they brought to Him a dumb Man, possessed with a Devil—

32.


Every Step our REDEEMER Took upon Earth, Seems to have thrown in His Way some Object of Compassion, who found in Him both a Will and Power Succour or to Save. A complication of Human malady, of a nature the most stressing and inveterate, is here presented to our view: a Sufferer, who, to the misery of being unable to hear the compassionate voice of his Fellow-creature, or to utter intelligibly his own complaints, or even to make known his most pressing wants, joined the even still greater evil of having his benighted mind and Spirit ravaged and enfuried by Satanic influence. And are there none among us, who feeling, as well we may feel, for the horrors of such a situation, are yet, even in ourselves, greater Objects of compassion? Do none of us shut wilfully our ears against the warning voice of Truth; and lock up the culties of speech from that most becoming exercise of it, the utterance of praise and thanksgiving to our CREATOR? Do we not cherish in our Souls those evil and corrupt affections, which are earthly, sensual, devilish? And how, if we continue in such perverse dealings with our MAKER, can we hope to escape the Condemnation of the Spirits of the Damned, and the Darkness and torments of Hell, if on Earth we prefer darkness to light, because we direct our deeds to purposes that are evil.

and when the Devil was Cast out, the Dumb spake. And the Multitudes marvelled, saying, "It was never so seen in Israel."—33

Well might the Multitudes marvel, and exclaim, "*It was never so seen in Israel!*" And greatly will they wonder at their miserable and destructive folly, who might have been Healed of far greater infirmities by The Same Gracious and enigmant POWER; and yet would not come unto Him. Why such Transcendent Instances of DIVINE Goodness and Tender Loving-Kindness did not waken more of devotedness to the Person and Cause of CHRIST, it is impossible to account for, otherwise than by resolving it into the too sad and general alienation of the heart of Man from the thankful and devotional Spirit, which could actuate him in his return for DIVINE Blessings and Mercies, Which All, more or less, experience.

but the Pharisees said, "He casteth out Devils through the Prince of the Devils!"—34.

To what miserable subterfuges have Pride and Envy recourse! The fallacy of such reasoning is beautifully and forcibly illustrated and exposed in the 11th chapter, and the 24th and following verses of St. Matthew.

and JESUS Went about all the Cities and Villages, Teaching in their Synagogues, and Preaching the Gospel of The KINGDOM (of GOD), and Healing every sickness and every disease among the People.—35. 

How much of the History of This Eventful and Inestimable Life of CHRIST on Earth is embodied in the small compass of this single verse! As He Went about Teaching and Preaching, and Doing Good to the Bodies as well as Souls of His brethren and Compatriots after the Flesh: So after His Goodly Example, and the extent of our several opportunities and abilities, should we follow in spirit



His steps and imitate His Example. In the Societies, into which we may be thrown, whether amidst the populousness of Cities, or the simple Peasantry scattered through retired Villages, we should deal out instruction in the great Truths of Religion, diffusing the knowledge of the Gospel and the Glad Tidings of Salvation whenever and wherever we can, with all patient perseverance and in all uprightness of intention, that The KINGDOM of HEAVEN may be Enlarged: and that, after our SAVIOUR'S Bright and Precious Example, the healing of sickness and disease, and the allaying or lightening of anguish or penury or affliction, may be effected if judiciously attempted. [See Chap. iv, 23.]

But when He Saw the Multitudes, He was Moved with Compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no Shepherd.—36.

From the Numbers, that followed The Blessed JESUS, it is impossible that All could have heard the Words of Eternal Life, Which Flowed from His Precious Lips; or have even seen the Objects, on whom His Miracles of Mercy were Wrought: but from the rumours that reached them of the Excellency of Both, they must have been led to much deep and devout thought, and so were influenced to hunger and thirst after Righteousness, and fainted for that Bread, Which Cometh down from Heaven, even The Word of Consolation and Rejoicing to the Soul. Like the Israelites after their Exodus from Egypt, and when the impending departure of Moses, their Appointed Leader, to the Land of Spirits, seemed to be leaving them as sheep, which had no Shepherd; when Moses himself compassionately prayed to *The LORD, The GOD of the Spirits of all Flesh*, on their behalf, to *Set a Man over the Congregation, which might go out before them, and which might go in before them, and which might lead them out, and which might bring them in* [Num. xxvii, 15 to 17.]; so did these Multitudes, which were scattered abroad as sheep having no Shepherd, draw on them, through their zeal, the Compassion of The Blessed SHEPHERD of Israel, and His Devotedness towards Administering to their Necessities and Lending the Counsel of His Wisdom to their Guidance. What a just, but cutting Reproof was this to the Israelitish Priesthood for their shameful abandonment of their Flock? and how does it recall to the recollection the awful Charge Delivered from The FOUNTAIN of Truth, in the time of the Prophet Ezekiel, *The Word of The LORD* (said the Prophet,) *Came unto me, Saying, "Son of Man! Prophecy against the Shepherds of Israel, Prophecy, and say unto them, Thus Saith The LORD GOD unto the Shepherds: Wo be to the Shepherds of Israel, that do feed themselves! Should not the Shepherds feed the Flocks? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool; ye kill them, that are fed; but ye feed not the Flock: the diseased have ye not strengthened; neither have ye healed that, which was sick; neither have ye bound up that, which was broken; neither have ye brought again that, which was driven away; neither have ye sought that, which was lost: but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. And they were scattered, because there is no Shepherd; and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered. MY Sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill; yea, My Flock was scattered upon all the face of the Earth; and None did search or seek after them. Therefore, ye Shepherds, hear the Word of The LORD! As I Live, Saith The LORD GOD, surely because My Flock became a prey, and My Flock became meat to every beast of the field, because there was no Shepherd; neither did My Shepherds search for My Flock; but the Shepherds fed themselves, and fed not My Flock; therefore, O ye Shepherds, hear the Word of The LORD! Thus Saith The LORD GOD, Behold, I am against the Shepherds, and I will Require My Flock at their hand, and Cause them to cease from feeding the Flock; neither shall the Shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will Deliver My Flock from their mouth, that they*

may not be meat for them. For thus Saith The LORD GOD, Behold, I, even I, will both Search My Sheep, and Seek them out: as a Shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep, that are scattered, so will I Seek out My Sheep, and will Deliver them out of all Places, where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day: and I will Bring them out from the People, and Gather them from the Countries, and will Bring them to their own Land, and Feed them upon the Mountains of Israel by the Rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the Country: I will Feed them in a good Pasture; and upon the high Mountains of Israel shall their Fold be; there shall they lie in a good Fold, and in a fat Pasture shall they feed upon the Mountains of Israel. I will Feed My Flock, and I will Cause them to lie down, Saith The LORD GOD: I will Seek that, which was lost, and Bring again that, which was driven away; and will Bind up that, which was broken; and will Strengthen that, which was sick: but I will Destroy the Fat and the Strong: I will Feed them with Judgment. And as for you, O My Flock, thus Saith The LORD GOD, Behold, I Judge between cattle and cattle, between the rams and the he-goats. Seemeth it a small thing unto you to have eaten up the good Pasture, but ye must tread down with your feet the residue of your pastures? and to have drunk of the deep waters; but ye must foul the residue with your feet! And as for My Flock, they eat that, which ye have trodden with your feet; and they drink that, which ye have fouled with your feet! Therefore, thus Saith The LORD GOD unto them, Behold, I, even I will Judge between the fat cattle and between the lean cattle; because ye have thrust with side and with shoulder, and pushed all the diseased with your horns, till ye have scattered them abroad; therefore will I Save My Flock; and they shall no more be a prey; and I will Judge between cattle and cattle. And I will Set up One SHEPHERD over them; and He shall Feed them, even My SERVANT DAVID: He shall Feed them; and He shall be their SHEPHERD: and I, The LORD, will be their GOD, and My SERVANT DAVID a PRINCE among them. I, The LORD, have Spoken It; and I will Make with them a Covenant of Peace: and will Cause the evil beasts to cease out of the Land: and they shall dwell safely in the Wilderness, and sleep in the woods: and I will Make them, and the Places round about My Hill a Blessing; and I will Cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be Showers of Blessing: and the tree of the field shall yield her fruit; and the Earth shall yield her increase; and they shall be safe in their Land, and shall know that I am The LORD, when I have Broken the bands of their yoke, and Delivered them out of the hand of those, that served themselves of them: and they shall no more be a prey to the Heathen; neither shall the beast of the Land devour them: but they shall dwell safely; and None shall make them afraid. And I will Raise up for them A Plant of Renown; and they shall be no more consumed with hunger in the Land; neither bear the shame of the Heathen any more. Thus shall they know that I, The LORD, their GOD, am with them; and that they, even the House of Israel, are My People, Saith The LORD GOD: and ye, My Flock, the Flock of My Pasture, are Men, and I am your GOD, Saith The LORD GOD."—Eze. xxxiv.

Characteristic as was this Prophecy of the state of the Jewish Church and Nation at the Advent of The Blessed SHEPHERD of Israel, yet how calculated is it to press reflection on the Ministers of the Church of CHRIST in all subsequent ages, not to neglect their Flocks; and not, from a hateful or fearful selfishness, to devour their substance, leaving the Souls of their Flock a prey to the famine of the Word of GOD; but, after the Example of The Gracious HEAD of the Church, to lead them into the rich pastures of Faith, and Hope, and all Christian Consolation through the Grace Imparted to them by The HOLY SPIRIT; that so by patient labour, by earnest exhortation and unflinching watchfulness, aided by continual prayer, they may not only bring, but constantly keep

their Flocks within the Pale of Salvation through a lively faith in JESUS CHRIST: lest the same awful Punishment Threatened and Executed against the careless and cruel Israelitish Shepherds, overtake them, and they go into Everlasting Desolation with the wanton and pampered and willing Wanderers from the Fold of CHRIST.


△ Then Saith He unto His Disciples, "The Harvest truly is plenteous; but the Labourers are few!"—37.

Plenteous indeed was, and still is the Harvest, since it embraces **All** of Human Kind; for **All** have Souls that are Immortal, not **One** of which would perish, if the Will of The LORD of the Harvest Prevailed, and Each took root downwards and bore fruit upwards. But if, through the stubbornness of the Soil of our Hearts, the Seed Sown by The DIVINE HUSBANDMAN, be rendered unproductive, though Fostered by the Beams of the SUN of Righteousness, and Watered by the Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT, it must wither and decay: and what is brought forth instead, being only of an evil nature, will be cast into the fire, which is never quenched. The Harvest to Which our SAVIOUR thus Particularly Alluded, was the Fruit of the Good Seed He had Sowed by His Doctrine, His Example, and His Miracles. And how much good Seed, alas, is ruined, and comes to nought from the want of skilful and faithful Labourers, or of industry or capacity in Those, who undertake the office: for Few, indeed, in the comparison, (looking all Christendom through,) are they, who sedulously do the Will of Him, That Sent them, and who work, while it is day, to prepare for That Harvest, Which is to be in the end of the World, and Which is here Meant. How Many receive wages, and that profusely, and leave their work to be done by Others! Every professing Minister and Messenger of GOD should so sow, that he may reap and gather fruit unto Eternal Life. How blind and infatuated with worldly and carnal affections must they be, who are neither roused by the Promise of eternal Rewards to the fulfilment of a duty voluntarily undertaken, nor alarmed into an observance of it by the Threat of the dreadful consequences of offending Him, in Whose Unpacified Displeasure are despair and wretchedness and Self-condemnation without end.

"Pray ye, therefore, The LORD of the Harvest, that He will Send forth Labourers into His Harvest!"—38.

May we, indeed, pray The LORD, as thus Encouragingly Suggested by Himself, when in the form of Man, and Working out our Salvation by His Own otherwise Unrewarded Labours, that He will Send forth Labourers into His Harvest, Such as will, with persevering industry and prayer-directed counsel, prepare the harvest of Human Souls for The DIVINE Sickle in the Day of Universal Judgment! And may the prayer embrace also the supplication that we ourselves may, by The HOLY SPIRIT'S Aid, ripen for that Harvest, and finally be Gathered into the Heavenly Granaries; so growing in Grace, as to manifest all willing obedience to the discipline and training of the True Church Militant on Earth, and exhibiting the patience of the Christian's hope of finally flourishing in the Paradise of our GOD! Yea, let the prayer of our hearts, as of our lips be, *that the Word of The LORD may have free Course and be Glorified; and that we may have faith Therein; so that The LORD, Who is Faithful, may Stablish us, and Keep us from evil, and Deliver us from unreasonable and wicked Men; and that we may both will and do the Things That are Commanded us; having our heart Directed, by the Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT, into the love of GOD, and into the patient waiting for CHRIST.*—2 Thess. iii, 1 to 5.

St. Luke records the Same Expressive Simile Used on another Occasion by our Blessed LORD: "*The Harvest truly is great, but the Labourers are few! Pray ye, therefore, The LORD of the Harvest, that He would Send forth Labourers into His Harvest!*"—Luke x, 1, 2.

CHAP. x.—And when He (JESUS) had Called unto Him His twelve Disciples, He Gave them Power against unclean Spirits, to cast them out; and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.—1. 

If any doubt could previously have existed in the minds of these Disciples whether JESUS were GOD, as well as Man, notwithstanding the Miracles He had Wrought, the Circumstance of His Imparting Such Wonderful Powers to those, who were admissively and avowedly but Men, must have effectually dispelled it in their minds, and in the minds of all sober and unprejudiced Persons, who were cognizant of it. And in the same measure of Benevolence, where He now Imparts His Grace, He Implants the Power against unclean Spirits in a Spiritual sense, the sensual and devilish and corrupting and contaminating affections and lusts, to cast them out of the heart; and to purify the Soul through the Sanctifying Influence of His Name and Word; and to heal all manner of Spiritual Diseases, even that sickness which weighs down the Soul with sorrow from the dread of everlasting Punishment, for having incensed the Wrath of The MOST HIGH; and that disease, which through vice and impiety had nearly brought on the pains of everlasting Death, but which, by prayer and fasting, by good example and pious exhortation and instruction, we may happily be instrumental to the healing, by awakening the Sufferers in the first instance to repentance, and then cherishing in them a faith, which shall manifest its sincerity by obedience. Such Balm of the Spiritual Gilad Gives increasing health and joy to him, that administers It, as well as renewed health and consolation to him, who receives It.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And He (JESUS) Goeth up into a Mountain, and Calleth unto Him whom He Would: and they came unto Him: And He Ordained Twelve, that they should be with Him; and that He might Send them forth to preach; and to have Power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out Devils.*—Chap. iii, 13 to 15.

St. Luke's account is thus: *Then He (JESUS) Called His twelve Disciples together, and Gave them Power and Authority over all Devils, and to cure diseases.*—Chap. ix, 1.

Now the names of the twelve Apostles are these: the first Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his Brother; James the Son of Zebedee, and John his Brother; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the Publican; James the Son of Alphæus, and Lebbeus, whose surname was Thaddæus; Simon, the Canaanite; and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him. These Twelve JESUS Sent forth, and Commanded them, Saying, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles; and into any City of the Samaritans, enter ye not!"—2 to 5.

With the exception of that wretched free Agent of Satan, Judas Iscariot, (whose sins seem to have been paramouly those of hypocrisy and covetousness,) what harmony seems to have subsisted amongst these Favoured Men, the Apostles of their LORD, the Chosen Messengers of His Offer of Peace; not only during the continuance of their MASTER'S Presence with them in the Flesh, but after His Separation from them; for the Eleven abode in the same room, continuing with one accord in prayer and supplication with the Women, and Mary, the Mother of JESUS, and with His Brethren.—Acts i, 13, 14.

The Command of JESUS was perfectly Consonant with every just notion of DIVINE Wisdom and Mercy, in Thus Directing the attention of the Apostles, in

the first instance, to the Chosen Seed of Abraham, by whom as having experienced the Light of Primeval Revelation in the Mosaic Dispensation and in the Prophetic Succession, it was reasonable to hope the Brighter Light of the Gospel might be borne and hailed with joyfulness. At all events, it seemed but just to give Those, who had the first claim by Promise to the knowledge of The LORD, and the full understanding of His Ways, the Means of Grace to strengthen their hope of Glory. It is true that amidst the Light of Spiritual Knowledge, Which had previously been Shed upon the Jews, they were Transgressors almost continually, and practically disregarded the Rules of faith, of holiness and of purity, by Which, in the Avowed Councils of their acknowledged LORD and JUDGE, they were eventually to be Tried: whereas the Gentiles, being ignorant of the Mosaic law, had only the law of conscience to bind and guide them, by which they were to stand or fall. But though the Chosen People of GOD were to be the primary Object of The MESSIAH'S Mission, as from them He, as regards the Flesh, Came, yet we shall see that, as the Labours of His Life on Earth were drawing to a Close, the Gentiles were to have the Gospel preached unto them by His Especial Order, and that through all the Regions of the Earth.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And Simon He Surnamed Peter; and James the Son of Zebedee, and John the Brother of James; and He Surnamed them Boanerges, which is, The Sons of Thunder: and Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the Son of Alphæus, and Thaddæus, and Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, which also betrayed Him.*—Chap. iii. 16 to 19.

St. Luke's narrative is thus: *And it came to pass, in those days, that He (JESUS) Went out into a mountain to Pray, and Continued all night in Prayer to GOD. And when it was day, He Called unto Him His Disciples, and of them He Chose Twelve, whom also He Named Apostles: Simon (whom He also Named Peter,) and Andrew his Brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew, Matthew and Thomas, James the Son of Alphæus, and Simon called Zelotes, and Judas the Brother of James, and Judas Iscariot, which also was the Traitor.*—Chap. vi. 12 to 16.

The SAVIOUR of the World, The SON of GOD, being a whole night in prayer! His DIVINE and Human Natures in thoughtful Communion, preparatorily to the more direct Entry upon His Gracious Ministrations: and when, perhaps, (as the Fruit of Such Abstracted Meditation) all the future Progress of His Gospel Dispensation was fully and finally Arranged in His Mind.

Lebbæus, surnamed Thaddæus, as stated by St. Matthew, was the Judas, the Brother of James the less, and Author of the Epistle of Jude.

“But go rather to the lost Sheep of the House of Israel!”—6.

This Comparison of the apostate Children of Promise, the rebellious, though Chosen Progeny of Jacob, to lost sheep, however poetically beautiful, is more appropriate in its reference to the anxiety and labour of their SHEPHERD to Recover them, than in its characteristic application to themselves; for sheep lose themselves owing to their not having discernment and understanding to guide them; and their thirst for novelty and an eagerness to leave a present pasture, however rich, for the uncertainty of even finding another, are instinctive in their nature. But with Man it is not so; and especially was it not so with the Israelites of old, Gifted as they were, in common with their Race, with reason, fore-thought and reflection, and still more Graciously Blest with the Light of DIVINE Truth: yet, notwithstanding all These Wondrous Helps, and the Inducements Interwoven with Them to continue in the Paths of their

CREATOR'S Commandments, and Which ultimately and necessarily Led to Joys unutterable and without end, did these corrupt and sensual and perverse Israelites, in the full possession of free agency, voluntarily and perseveringly leave those Paths of Pleasantness and Peace, for the broad road that leadeth to destruction through the gate of pride and self-indulgence. And as the pit of everlasting desolation and despair was opening to receive them, how Consistent was it with the Benevolent Charities of Him, Who Came to Save that which was lost, to Direct His Labourers first to endeavour the rescue of those, who were in the most imminent danger. Even the Apostle of the Gentiles admitted that the Jews were the first Objects of CHRIST'S Merciful Mediation, for he preached amongst them; and not till after *they were filled with envy* (at seeing the Multitude of Proselytes, which both he and Barnabas made,) *and spake against those Things, Which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming, did Paul and Barnabas, waxing bold, say, "It was necessary that the Word of GOD should first have been Spoken to you: but seeing ye put It from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of Everlasting Life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles!"*—Acts xiii, 43, 45, 46. Whilst mourning over the perverse spirit of the unbelieving Jews, let us look inwardly upon ourselves; and remembering how often we have forsaken The SHEPHERD of our Souls, and forgotten His Commandments, may we pray earnestly that He will *Seek* us, and Save us by Bringing us within the Pale of His Salvation! [Ps. cxix, 176.] And what Gracious Encouragement have we to do so, for though, as the Prophet Isaiah both told and foretold, that *All, like sheep, have gone astray, and have turned every One to his own way; yet hath our HEAVENLY FATHER Laid on The SON of His Love, as The Offered Sacrifice for sin, the iniquity of us All:* [Chap. liii, 6.] and so, through faith in That Mediatorial Offering, may we, as St. Peter exhorteth, *return unto The SHEPHERD and BISHOP of our Souls*, and find Peace and Holy Rest as the effect of our so doing. [1 Peter ii, 25.]

"And as ye go, preach, saying, 'The KINGDOM of HEAVEN is at hand!'"—7.

The Doctrine here Directed by our SAVIOUR to be Inculcated by His Apostles is the Same, Which He Himself, and His Forerunner, the Baptist, had Taught,—a Doctrine equally applicable to and equally required to be insisted on by all Preachers and Teachers in all ages of the Christian Church, past, present, and to come; being neither more nor less than a Warning to All, that on the acceptance or rejection of the Word of GOD, as Offering Salvation, through CHRIST, by faith and righteousness, will depend our Condition in all Eternity, whether we shall have an Inheritance with the Saints in Light in the Everlasting and transcendantly Glorious KINGDOM of JEHOVAH, sharing all the Bounty and Benevolence, and admiring the Wisdom and the Holiness of the TRIUNE GODHEAD; or whether we shall be Cast, as the only alternative, amidst Spiritual desolation, and remorse and despair, enduring the famine of the Soul, and destitute, and Forsaken of GOD. And as Death will assuredly pass on All, and the continuance of life here to Any, even the Stoutest and Healthiest and Youngest amongst us, is, in every instant, liable to interruption, (for who can say what a day or an hour may bring forth,) and, on the approach of Death, the KINGDOM of HEAVEN will be either at hand, or for ever afar off: well will it be, therefore, if at such a time we are prepared to enter It. And who can tell, if It be rejected to day, that there will be opportunity to accept It to-morrow? for ere to-morrow come, the hand of Death may be too suddenly upon us, or the mind be veiled in an impenetrable mist.

St. Luke's narrative is thus continued: *And He (JESUS) Sent them (the Apostles) to preach the KINGDOM of GOD, and to heal the Sick: [Chap. ix. 2.] and again, Commanded them to heal the Sick, and say unto them, "The KINGDOM of GOD is Come Nigh unto you!"—Chap. x, 9.*

△ "Heal the Sick! cleanse the Lepers! raise the Dead! cast out Devils! Freely ye have Received, freely give!"—8

The most Merciful Consideration for both the bodily and Spiritual sufferings and infirmities and incapacities of His Creatures, seems to have been ever uppermost in our SAVIOUR'S Mind: not only in All, Which He Himself Did, or Taught, is this conspicuously Displayed, but in All He Authorised or Commissioned or Instructed Others to do or teach. And hence may we ourselves learn the great duty of Life, and should close instantly with the Terms on Which the KINGDOM of HEAVEN is Offered to us; and for CHRIST'S Sake, Who has Proposed to Make us Joint-Heirs with Himself of That KINGDOM, by contributing all within our power towards healing the Sick, whether sick in Soul or in body; towards cleansing the leprous effects of wickedness; towards raising the Dead in trespasses and sins to newness of Life in purity and piety; towards casting out Devils and evil imaginations that have taken hold of the heart or mind, and subjected them to a destroying and contaminating influence. For Freely and Abundantly, even beyond measure, through the Exhaustless Riches of the Power and Love of GOD, have we Received Grace of Him, through CHRIST JESUS; and freely, therefore, should we give and lend Thereof; ever regarding ourselves as Stewards and Ministers both of the Mysteries and Mercies of GOD! And let us not be seduced either by the evil that is lurking within us, or by the subtlety and artifices of the busy and inveterate Enemy of our Souls, to barter the Good we are thus entrusted with, in exchange for the unsatisfying and transitory pleasures of this Life! remembering that *we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of CHRIST; that every One may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.*—2 Cor. v, 10. May we be at all times on our guard, like Peter, when offered by Simon money for the purchase of the power to impart the Gift of The HOLY GHOST, and, who in the true spirit of a faithful Steward of the Manifold Graces of GOD, thus answered the Sorcerer: *Thy money perish with thee! because thou hast thought that the Gift of GOD may be purchased with money: thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter; for thy heart is not right in the Sight of GOD: Repent, therefore, of this thy wickedness; and pray GOD, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be Forgiven thee! for I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity!*—Acts viii, 18 to 23.

△ "Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses; nor scrip for your journey; neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves! for the Workman is worthy of his meat."—9, 10.


This Injunction may be considered as peculiar to the Apostles and primitive Ministers of the Gospel, when the Religion was to be established by their miraculous works, as well as Divinely-Inspired Words; and not as applicable, at least in the letter, to the present times, when the Church of CHRIST is in one sense established by the Compilation and Dissemination of the New Testament, and the appointment and succession of Ministers, who do the work of edification, having suitable provision made for their support. Those Ministers, fitted as they are, or should be, if in Truth SPIRITUALLY Called to their sacred trust, by preparatory discipline and exercise, and, above all, by prayer-invited Aid of The HOLY SPIRIT, for the discharge of their important

functions, want not Miraculous Powers, at least as to temporal supplies, though their Spiritual Influence, is still an Especial Gift from HEAVEN. Yet even with Apostolic Privileges how treacherous often is the Human heart in the use of Them, as was, indeed, instanced, and Prophetically Remonstrated on in the Forebodings of our SAVIOUR in reference to the conduct of these, His Chosen Disciples! for, when the Season of His Own Sufferings was approaching, He Knew that their hearts would fail them through very fear, and that they would prove unfaithful to Him; and He then Adverted to the Commission He had Given them in the Text, Saying, "*When I Sent you, without purse, and scrip and shoes, lacked you any thing?*" And they said, "*Nothing!*" Then Said He unto them, "*But now he, that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip; and he, that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one!*"—Luke xxii, 35, 36.

If the Labourers and Workers in things belonging to this Life are worthy of their hire and receive it, should the Spiritual Labourers, who work for the everlasting nurture and edification of the Soul, be requited grudgingly? It well becomes them to be moderate in their requests or expectations, and to be contented with their lot, whatever it may be, looking to the Riches and Inheritance That Await them in the Life to Come. A pious and faithful Pastor of his Flock may say, with St. Paul, "*Are not ye my work in The LORD? Have I not power to eat and to drink? Who goeth a warfare at any time at his own charges? Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? Say I these things as a Man? or saith not the Law the same also? for it is Written in the Law of Moses, 'Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox, that treadeth out the corn!'*" Doth GOD Take Care for oxen? or, Saith He It altogether for our sakes? For our sakes no doubt This is Written, that he, that ploweth, should plow in hope; and that he, that thresheth in hope, should be Partaker of his hope. If we have sown unto you Spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? Do ye not know, that they, which minister about Holy Things, live of the Things of the Temple? and they, which wait at the Altar, are Partakers with the Altar? Even so hath The LORD Ordained, that they, which preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel!—1 Cor. ix, 1. 4. 7 to 11. 13, 14. For us, who are not of the Ministry, it is essential to our hope in the Mercy and Everlasting Favour of GOD, that with becoming diligence in our several callings we accept, as at GOD'S Hand, whatever may flow in upon us, using it as His Stewards; and that we do not take unreasonable thought for the morrow.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And (JESUS) Commanded them (the Twelve) that they should take nothing for their journey, save a staff only; no scrip, no bread, no money in their purse; but be shod with sandals; and not put on two coats.*—Chap. vi, 8, 9.

St. Luke's thus: *He (JESUS) Said unto them (the Twelve) "Take nothing for your journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats a piece!"*—Chap. ix, 3, and x, 4.

"And into whatsoever City or Town ye shall enter, inquire, 'Who in it is worthy?' and there abide till ye go thence! And when ye come into an house, salute it! and if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it!"—11 to half of 13. 

The society of the Good and Faithful and truly Pious is a judicious and delightful Antepast of that Communion of Saints, which we believe will take place in the Land of Spirits; and the mixing in such Society gives us the highest relish for Spiritual Things, tending to advance our knowledge, to incite reciprocal tenderness and charity, to exercise us in a true and lively faith, and to animate us in the ways of Righteousness and Holiness of Life.



If to salute the house of Man, for receiving a Disciple of CHRIST, were a Command from CHRIST Himself when on Earth, such a salutation will still be, in Spirit, Expected from On High to similar hospitality in this our day; and inasmuch as we do it unto the Least even of the Brethren in the faith, we do it unto CHRIST; and the thought of that should throw open all doors to the Worthy. Unto such protection and support of the Ministers and Stewards of the Mysteries of GOD, will The LORD Extend His Blessing of Peace; a Peace, which surpasseth the understanding of the Irreligious, and is a continual feast to the Soul; being the Assurance of The DIVINE Favour both in Time and in Eternity.

St. Luke's narrative is: "*Salute no Man by the way! and into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, 'Peace be to this house!' And, if the Son of Peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again: and in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give! for the Labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house! And into whatsoever City ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you!*"—Chap. x, half of 4 to 8.


"But, if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you! and Whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or City, shake off the dust of your feet! Verily I Say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the Land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the Day of Judgment, than for that City."—Half of 13 to 15.

How lamentably but justly reversed will be their fate, who, having such Peace offered to them, reject it, and spurn from them the Means of Grace! As the prayer of the holy Psalmist [Ps. xxxv, 13.] (and Prophetically That of JESUS,) for his Enemies *returned into his own Bosom*; so is it with those, who tender the Gospel Salutation to them, that refuse to receive It, and thus do despite to The SPIRIT of Grace. They, who cast from them the right hand of Spiritual Fellowship in JESUS, shutting their ears to the voice of the Charmer of Souls, charm he never so wisely, and in the pride of their reasoning and the worship of their own understanding will not hear the Horn of Salvation, Sound It ever so Sweetly; or, hearing It, will not obey Its Summons to a holy fear and a lively faith, will return to their dust, and continue the Victims of Corruption; and the feet of them, that live in the Land of Darkness and Despair, shall be lifted up against them. The execution of this symbol of DIVINE Vengeance was done on the Jews, at Antioch, by Paul and Barnabas, *who shook off the dust of their feet against them*; [Acts xiii, 50, 51.] and though a temporal Punishment, so truly tremendous as That of Sodom and Gomorrha, does not appear to have been immediately Visited on that City; yet, if it shall be more tolerable for the Inhabitants of Places, so sunk in the most horrid practices of sensuality, in the Day of Judgment, than for the People of such Cities as Antioch and Jerusalem, how awfully and culpably dead are they to every feeling of self-interest, who put in jeopardy both body and Soul, and render them amenable to such a Visitation!

St. Mark's continuation of the narrative is thus: "*And Whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you; when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them! Verily I Say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the Day of Judgment, than for that City!*"—Chap. vi, 11.

St. Luke's is thus: "*And Whosoever will not receive you, when ye go out of that City, shake off the very dust from your feet, for a testimony against them!*" [Chap. ix, 5.] and again: "*Into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, 'Peace be to this house!' And, if the Son of Peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it; if not, it shall turn to you again: and in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give; for the Labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from*

*nuse to house ! And into whatsoever City ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you ; and heal the Sick that are therein ; and say unto them, The KINGDOM of GOD is Come Nigh unto you !' But into whatsoever City ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say, ' Even the very dust of your City, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you : notwithstanding, be ye sure of this, that The KINGDOM of GOD is Come Nigh unto you !' But, I Say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable in that Day for Sodom, than for that City."—Chap. x, 5 to 12. In observance of the spirit of this Injunction, Paul and Barnabas shook off the dust of their feet against the people at Antioch, as before observed upon : and so when Paul had not dust, he took his raiment at the unbelieving Jews in Corinth, saying, when they opposed themselves and blasphemed at the Name of JESUS, [Acts xviii, 6.] " *Your blood upon your own heads ! I am clean. From henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.*"*

Behold, I Send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves ; be ye, therefore, wise as serpents, and harmless as doves !" —16. 

The meekness, which characterizes the Professors of the Christian religion, when contrasted with the haughtiness of worldly-minded Persons, is as full of contrast as the character of sheep and wolves, and should seem to be without the means or the hope of protection, when beset by so virulent and overbearing a horn and opposition. But their refuge is in GOD through The SAVIOUR of souls : and in the singleness of the Christian's eye towards Him, Who is LORD over all the Earth, they find that it is the Office of The OMNIPOTENT graciously to Sustain the Faithful. From The SPIRIT of Grace too, do they, by supplication, draw forth that Wisdom, which fortifies them against all the machinations of the Evil One ; and, being tempered with innocence and integrity, is figuratively characterized as the harmlessness of the dove and the acuteness of the serpent : And such an union of prudence and judgment with humility, as further encouraged and explained by the Apostle Paul when, in addressing the Roman Converts, he wrote thus : *I would have you wise unto that which is evil, and simple concerning evil !* and he adds this consolatory Prophecy, *And he GOD of Peace shall Bruise Satan under your feet shortly :* [Rom. xvi, 19, 20.] And to the Ephesian Converts he writes : *See that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as Wise !*—Ephe. v, 15. And again, to the Corinthians : *Be not children in understanding ; howbeit in malice be ye Children ; but in understanding be Men !*—1 Cor. xiv, 20. May the same mind be in us, that is here urged to ; in CHRIST'S and His Apostle's Followers ! for we have need of all Spiritual Wisdom ; and That will be found all-sufficient to confound the wisdom of the worldly-wise. And may we, in a corresponding spirit, use every triumph that we may so gain, by seeking to make Converts of Others to the right faith, *doing all things without murmuring ; that we may be blameless and harmless, the Children of GOD, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse Generation ; among whom we should shine as Lights in the World, holding forth the Word of Life eternal.*—Phil. ii, 14 to 16.

St. Luke thus briefly notices the after Mission of Seventy by our LORD : *Go your ways ! behold, I Send you forth as lambs among wolves.*"—Chap. x, 3.

But beware of Men ! for they will deliver you up to the Councils ; and they will scourge you in their Synagogues : and ye shall be brought before Governors and Kings for My Sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles."—17, 18.

The heart of Man, with comparatively but few exceptions, is evil from his birth up ; and, unless Controuled and Regulated by the purifying Influence of

DIVINE Grace, is a pit of destruction and a snare which it behoves us to watch and guard against, by all the prudence and circumspection, aided by supplication for Aid from The HOLY SPIRIT, which we can employ. But, alas, perhaps the greatest Enemy every Human Soul has, is his own deceiving and deceived heart, and the evil propensities of its self-will and impure affections. The fate, that awaited the Chosen Stewards and first Ministers of the Gospel Dispensation, as here Foretold by our SAVIOUR, was that, which still is experienced by the lowly and fervent Followers of the same Faith, who, through fear and trembling, work out their Salvation under persecutions and strifes and envyings, both from without and from within; for they are oftentimes delivered up to the councils of the Profane, the Sensualist, and the Spiritually Proud; and are scourged and lacerated in mind, having, amidst their pursuit of Christian perfection, their motives misconstrued and their actions traduced. But their support should be, that their once Crucified, but now Glorified LORD, was Reviled and Persecuted, and Blasphemed; but Exhibited a Patience and Forbearance, That Heightened the Excellencies of His All-Perfect Character; and in our minds should we cherish the Consoling Truth, that All, who suffer for His Sake, will be Received unto a Participation in His Glory. The fate of The Apostles was like their MASTER'S, generally speaking, that of persecution unto death. But All, who like them, suffer for Righteousness' sake and the Gospel's, will, with them, ultimately gain a Release from a troublesome World; and join the Society and Fellowship of Saints and Angels amidst the visual Glories of The GODHEAD. By one Herod, as we have read, John, the Forerunner of our SAVIOUR, was imprisoned and beheaded: By another Herod, *St. James*, the Brother of John the Evangelist, *was slain with the sword*.—Acts xii, 1, 2. *Stephen*, one of the seven Deacons, Appointed by the Apostles, *was stoned to death*.—Acts vi, 5, and vii, 58, 59. *St. Paul and Silas* were imprisoned and scourged and confined in the stocks.—Acts xvi, 19, 24. From the authority of coteremporary Historians, persecutions and imprisonments and tortures and death were visited upon all the Apostles, with the exception of St. John, (but banishment was executed upon him,) and upon very many of the early and zealous Disciples of the same Faith. And shall we shrink from taking up our cross and following The Same Crucified MASTER, Who Assures us, that the Fulness of Heavenly Bliss awaits all Such, as follow Him even unto the end; through Whom the Day of our Redemption from sin and suffering and Spiritual death and Hell draweth nigh.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: "*Take heed to yourselves*, (Said JESUS to His Disciples,) *for they shall deliver you up to Councils; and in the Synagogues ye shall be beaten; and ye shall be brought before Rulers and Kings for My Sake, for a testimony against them*."—Chap. xiii, 9.

St. Luke's is thus: "*They shall lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the Synagogues and into Prisons, being brought before Kings and Rulers for My Name's Sake; and it shall turn to you for a testimony*."—Chap. xxi, 12, 13.

But, though beaten and in every way persecuted, the true Followers of CHRIST and His Gospel rejoice that they are counted worthy to suffer shame for His Name.—Acts v. 40, 41.

△ "But, when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak! for it shall be Given you in that same hour what ye shall speak: for it is not ye, that speak; but The SPIRIT of your FATHER, Which Speaketh in you!"—19, 20.

It is from the want of faith in the Assistance and Efficacy of the Grace of GOD, Which is Continually and Freely Offered to us, that all our difficulties, through the weakness and corruptions of our Nature, arise. By the reverential

seeking and rightly using the Ever-Proffered Aid of The HOLY SPIRIT it is that we might remove every obstacle in the way of our growth in Grace, and overcome every barrier against our Soul's Salvation. May we ever bear in mind that GOD is ever Present with us, and is An Ever-Ready Help in time of need! His Strength is made Manifest in our weakness, and no One, that with integrity of heart and holy confidence trusteth in Him, will He ever Forsake. By our seeking, therefore, with patient perseverance and in humbleness of mind, for This His Inestimable Light and Guidance, all Things that we can Spiritually stand in need of will be Freely Given to us. But let us not presume on Its possession, until by contrition and fervent faith our hearts are fitted for Its reception; and then, when we need, will The LORD Give us Wisdom and Utterance; [Luke xxi, 15.] Yea, *The LORD will be with our mouths, and Teach us what we shall say*,—Exod. iv, 12.

The talent of preaching and reasoning with effect, in the spirit of Holiness and with the force of DIVINE Truth, is reserved for GOD'S Chosen and faithful Ministers; but may be obtained by prayer-prompted strivings with The SPIRIT, and in all teachableness of mind and heart. The Foreknowledge of The ALMIGHTY Leads Him to Make Choice of the fittest Objects for His Great Purpose, the Salvation of Souls: He Knows all the springs and movements of our hearts in all the progress of our Lives, even before we put them into action, or have any purposes of our own; and the Especial Visitations of His Grace, as the Effect of His Election, may be Resolved into That Foreknowledge and Its reasonable Consequence, Predestination. Not but that it is in OMNIPOTENCE to Appropriate, if It so Will, and only because It Willet so, Some of Its Creatures to perpetual Condemnation, and Some to Eternal Glory: though it may seem more reconcileable to Human judgment, and the General Tenor of The DIVINE Dealings with Mankind, and the Flow of Benevolence That unceasingly Proceeds from That Gracious SOURCE of all Being, to conclude that the predisposition of the Human heart individually Guides Him in the Direction of His Especial Grace and Favour. By thus seeking to frame our hearts aright with GOD, we are sure of the Co-operation of His Grace, and, robing ourselves in our SAVIOUR'S Righteousness, we may trust that the Favour of HEAVEN will continually Rest upon us, and Its Light will Guide us unto all Truth, and Fit us for the Work, which, in His Service, our GOD may Graciously Appoint us to do; and in that confidence we may well wait in patience for the Redemption and Adoption of our Souls unto Life and Glory Everlasting; regardless alike of the detractions and revilings of a harshly and hastily judging World: knowing that, though sin may surround us, Grace will much more abound within us.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: "*But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought before-hand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate, but Whatsoever shall be Given you in that hour, that speak ye! for it is not ye, that speak, but The HOLY GHOST*."—Chap. xiii, 11.

St. Luke's as follows: "*And when they bring you unto the Synagogues, and unto Magistrates and Powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say! for The HOLY GHOST shall Teach you in the same hour What ye ought to say*."—Chap. xii, 11, 12. And in an another place: "*Settle it, therefore, in your hearts not to meditate before what ye shall answer! for I (JESUS) will Give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your Adversaries shall not be able to gainsay, nor resist*."—Chap. xxi, 14, 15.

That the utterance of true Wisdom is the Especial Gift of The SPIRIT has been the acknowledgment of all holy Persons in all ages of the Church. David said, "*The SPIRIT of The LORD Spake by me, and His Word was in my tongue*."—2 Sam. xxiii, 2. The Especial Gift of The SPIRIT is Wisdom in

utterance and in conduct, and to this all the recorded doings and sayings of the Apostles and early Disciples bear ample testimony. May we, therefore, pray to be Enriched in all utterance and in all knowledge, through CHRIST, by The SPIRIT of Grace!

△ “And the Brother shall deliver up the Brother to death, and the Father the Child; and the Children shall rise up against their Parents, and cause them to be put to death: and ye shall be hated of all Men for My Name’s Sake. But he, that endureth to the end, shall be Saved.”—21, 22.

Such was the Prophetic picture of the unnatural usage the early Supporters of Him, Who Came to Save a lost World, and to Restore Man to primeval Happiness and the truest and most enduring Joy, were to experience: and such is even still but too much the treatment that Spiritually-minded Persons encounter in the World, and very frequently from their own Kindred, who perversely serve not GOD nor acknowledge His Revealed Will, but yield to their own vain imaginations, or to their lusts and base passions: even one Brother being taunted and derided, if not persecuted, by Another; and a Father, disdaining subjection to The FATHER of the Universe, rejecting the Child of his loins, because seeking Wisdom from Above; and the Children of pious Parents often manifesting the most unfilial spirit, and breaking out into every species of insubordination and riot and perverseness, flinging from them the Parental Counsel that would have led them through paths of purity, and meekness and holy love, to Pleasantness and Peace. Sometimes from want of early restraint and from the effect of an unmodified indulgence at the opening of life, Parental hopes are blasted and bosoms anguished, and heads bowed down with sorrow to the grave, as was instanced in the pious Eli. And as it was in the time of the Prophet Micah, so is it but too often witnessed even in these our brighter days of SPIRITUAL Light, that *the Son dishonoureth the Father; the Daughter riseth up against her Mother; and the Daughter in law against her Mother in law: a Man’s Enemies are the Men of his own House.*—Chap. vii, 6.

Abroad, as well as at home, were persecutions to overtake the Faithful; and, as it was Foretold, so hath it been Fulfilled: the meekness, the integrity, the patience, the fortitude, the temperance, the zeal, the love, the charity, the devotion of the true Christian have, in all Ages, drawn down the enmity, hatred, and malice of the Wicked and Worldly-minded. But, Blessed be GOD, they, who have suffered in His Cause, and endured unto the end in the paths of Righteousness and true Holiness, in faith and godly works, shall be Glorified amongst the Saints in Light and Life Eternal, as the Promised Salvation Wrought by CHRIST for all them, that are His at His Second Coming: yea, Blessed is Every one, that, being persecuted for Righteousness’ sake, endureth unto the end, in patience possessing his Soul!

St. Mark’s narrative is thus: “*Now the Brother shall betray the Brother to death, and the Father the Son; and Children shall rise up against their Parents, and shall cause them to be put to death: and ye shall be hated of all Men for My Name’s sake; but he, that shall endure unto the end, the Same shall be Saved.*”—Chap. xiii, 12, 13.

St. Luke’s is as follows: “*And ye shall be betrayed both by Parents and Brethren and Kinsfolks and Friends; and Some of you shall they cause to be put to death; and ye shall be hated of all Men for My Name’s Sake: but there shall not be an hair of your head perish: In your patience possess ye your Souls!*”—Chap. xxi, 16 to 19.

"But when they persecute you in this City, flee ye into another! for Verily I Say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the Cities of Israel, till The SON of Man be Come."  
—23.

Thus it seems there is a line drawn, which we shall do well to observe: non-resistance of evil is not an universal doctrine: but when by an endurance of persecution no benefit, even through the influence of example, can be obtained, owing to the immovable obduracy of both Actors and Spectators in the cruelty and injustice inflicted, then, if it be possible, it is justifiable to escape by flight; a flight, however, not to timid inactivity, but to shew the wisdom as well as virtue of the Christian character in a more genial region or society; thus spreading the Blessings of The SAVIOUR'S Advent by diffusing farther the Gospel Light, and preparing other Immortal Souls for That SAVIOUR'S Second Advent in the Fulness of Power and of Glory. In withdrawing from evil, when we cannot usefully withstand it, we have thus the most undoubted Sanction; but the distinction, difficult as it may seem, between the point, to which patience may be carried, and where it is to end, will be made manifest to the prayerful Soul by the Guidance of The HOLY SPIRIT, if that Guidance be meekly yet fervently sought: and to us, unto whom the doctrine in its letter was not meant to apply (but rather to the Christianized Jews pending the siege and fall of Jerusalem) of fleeing from one City to another, it nevertheless may, in spirit, be appropriated by our considering the hearts of our Fellow-Creatures as so many Cities, and by our at first seeking a favourable entrance into and influence over such as we have intercourse with; and only upon their rejecting us or driving us from their communion, may we withdraw from them, as disabled from doing them good; and can only pray for their conversion.

This Coming of The SON of Man, alluded to in the latter part of the Text, may seem to be, The SON of Man Rising in the Power of His DIVINITY Triumphant over Death and Hell, as The SON of GOD.

"The Disciple is not above his Master, nor the Servant above his Lord. It is enough for the Disciple that he be as his Master; and the Servant as his Lord. If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his Household?"—24, 25. △

As The Blessed JESUS was Persecuted from City to City, Scourged and Spit upon, and at last cruelly Tortured to Death; so let not the faithful Followers of JESUS faint, if they in any way suffer persecution, nor shrink if it be even unto death; for the Cross is the Banner, under Which the true Soldiers of CHRIST are sure of Victory even over Death and Sin and Hell. However wretched may be the lot of the most Abject and Forlorn of Human Kind, it must fall infinitely short of that wretchedness and anguish, which the Pure SPIRIT of CHRIST Endured without a Murmur, and that, not for His Own Benefit in the least, but exclusively for Men's; when He thus Took our Nature upon Him, and Bore our griefs and Carried our sorrows, and was Wounded for our transgressions, and Bruised for our iniquities, and upon Whom was the Chastisement of our Peace Laid, and with Whose Stripes we are Healed. And not only in patience but in charity should we strive to be like our MASTER, and never shrink from the offices of each of those Graces and Duties, Which He so Exemplarily and Benignantly Fulfilled; and, in so Doing, virtually Admonished us to go and do likewise: for we should All seek perfection, that to the extent of our ability we should be like our Heavenly MASTER. [Luke vi, 40.] *And if the World should, therefore, hate us, we know that it both hated and persecuted even unto death The LORD of Life and Glory.* [John xv, 20. 18.]

*It is enough* indeed; and the highest Human suffering hath this all-sufficient Consolation with it, that, if inflicted, and patiently endured, for CHRIST'S Sake and the Gospel's, it will bring forth, at the Second Birth, the Issues of Everlasting Peace, flowing with Rivers of Pleasures before the Visual Presence of The MOST HIGH.

According to St. John, our SAVIOUR, on another occasion, Used the same Argument with His Disciples, when He Condescended even to Wash their feet, Saying, "*Ye call Me 'MASTER and LORD!' and ye say well; for So I am. I have Given you an Example, that ye should do, as I have Done. Verily, Verily I Say unto you, The Servant is not greater than his Lord; neither he, that is sent, greater than he that sent him:*" [Chap. xiii, 13 to 16.] and again: "*Remember the Word that I Said unto you. 'The Servant is not greater than his Lord.' If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you: and all these things will they do unto you for My Name's Sake; because they know not Him, That Sent Me.*"—Chap. xv, 20, 21.


"Fear them not therefore! for there is nothing covered, that shall not be Revealed; and hid, that shall not be Known."—26.

To bear the Reproach for CHRIST'S Sake, Which He Bore for us, though it be to charge us as Sons of Belial, will, eventually, only the more advance us to the exalted rank of Children of Light; whilst the Spirits of those, who so sought in a hellish purpose to taunt or torment us, will be doomed to be the Children of Beelzebub, and find the Prince of Devils to be their Lord and Master, and to prove a Tyrant of insatiable fury and oppression. The best ground of confidence with those, who profess to be Followers of CHRIST, and who really are so in spirit and in truth, is conviction of the Omniscience as well as of the Omnipotence of GOD; that He is not only Willing and Able to Save, but that all hearts are open to Him; and that from Him no secrets are hid: that His All-Seeing Eye Penetrates the deepest devices of Men and of Devils, and Traces all actions to their risings, and all effects to their causes; equally Alive to the secret prayer, or the unuttered curse; to the purity of the thought, or the adultery of the heart: the whole Man in his component parts of Body and Soul, and in all their respective qualities and operations, is ever manifest before Him; and things which, through design or accident, never escaped beyond the range of the thoughts, but remained undivulged till death, will afterwards, at the general Resurrection, be known and proclaimed universally. And how will the Creatures of hypocrisy feel their remorse heightened to see before them the Objects of their deception, who, from mistakingly believing in them, loved and cherished them on Earth; but who then, knowing them as they will be thoroughly known, will turn from and abandon them, without one sigh of compassion, to everlasting desolation and Self-condemnation. While, on the contrary, the holy Life led even in the thought of the truly Pious, but veiled in humility and holy fear during the Earthly pilgrimage, will in Heaven be greeted by the tongues of Seraphs and of Angels, and be welcomed to the KINGDOM Prepared for them by The FATHER.

According to St. Mark, our SAVIOUR, on another occasion. Assured His Disciples that "*there is nothing hid, which shall not be Manifested; neither any thing kept secret, but that it shall come abroad.*"—Chap. iv, 22.

St. Luke likewise thus records the Address: "*There is nothing covered, that shall not be Revealed; neither hid, that shall not be Known: therefore, whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the Light; and that, which ye have spoken in the ear in closets, shall be Proclaimed upon the housetops.*"—Chap. xii, 2, 3.

From the Same Great and Influential Truth, St. Paul drew this admonition to the Corinthian Converts: "*Judge nothing before the time, until The LORD Come, Who both will Bring to Light the hidden things of darkness, and will Make Manifest the counsels of the hearts.*"—1 Cor. iv, 5.

"What I Tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light! and What ye hear in the ear, That preach ye upon the housetops!"—27. 

From the previously quoted passage in St. Luke xii, 2, 3, a different sense seems derivable, unless the occasion was different, for there our SAVIOUR'S Address seems personal to the Pharisees, intending to expose to them the certain discomfiture of their hypocrisy, however ingeniously it may, for a season, be glossed over. Here, however, it is Given as a Commandment to His Disciples themselves, to make generally known What He had secretly Communicated to them. This latter Direction, however, may be followed very salutarily by us, with reference to the impressions made on our hearts by the Word of GOD, and to the secret Communications of The SPIRIT of Grace to our Souls; and in doing this, though we may also bring to light the offences of our heart, and such deeds of darkness as we may well blush to remember, (and which, when made known, may sink us very low in Others' esteem,) yet is it far better that the confession should be made in the present life, when an opportunity is afforded, and so through deep contrition and consistent amendment to wipe away the stain, and reinstate ourselves in the good opinion of Those, whose esteem we have most reason to cultivate, and who, feeling their own infirmities and backslidings, will regard with tenderness and compassion the errors of Others, more particularly when there is so sincere a proof of vital penitence shewn; by free and open confession voluntarily made, and by amendment of life, rendered conspicuous in all our after conversation and conduct.

"And fear not them, which kill the body; but are not able to kill the Soul! but rather fear Him, Which is Able to Destroy both Soul and Body in Hell!"—28.

The utmost of Human malice, if it corrupt not our faith, nor break down our confidence in GOD, nor influence us to abandon our devotedness to His Service, is to agonize the Body, and to bring it in sufferings and in torture to the confines of the first death: but, if these sufferings be borne with Christian patience, and without any abandonment of the Christian hope, and more especially when endured in the Cause of CHRIST and for Righteousness' sake, then do these agonies of the Body form the triumph of the Soul. And, by such sufferings, the life of the faithful Follower of The Blessed REDEEMER is likened to That of his beloved LORD and MASTER, and gives the least questionable assurance of an Election, through DIVINE Grace, unto the Glory That Awaits the Redeemed in CHRIST JESUS. May we never, therefore, suffer any unreasonable fear of the power of Man to influence us to an abandonment of our faith, or to a deviation from the path of our duty; but may our prevailing fear be a holy reverence of Him, Who Created the Heavens and the Earth, and on Whom the Appointments in this Life, and in the Unending One to Come, entirely depend. *Let us sanctify The LORD of Hosts in our heart and by our Lives, and Let Him be our fear, and let Him be our dread!* as admonished by the Prophet Isaiah; [Chap. viii, 12, 13.] for well may we ask ourselves, as St. Peter did his Correspondents, *Who is he, that will harm us, if we be Followers of that, which is good?* and may likewise add, *but and if we suffer for Righteousness' sake, happy are we!* And may we never be afraid of their terror, nor troubled, though worldly danger surround us; but may we sanctify The LORD GOD in



*our hearts!*—1 Peter iii, 13 to 15. The Old Testament abounds in Admonitions to rest our fear on the Right Foundation; pronouncing *the fear of The LORD to be the beginning*, as the love of Him is the consummation, *of wisdom*. To discard such fear from the mind, merely because GOD is not Visible to our natural eyes, though He never can be but Present with us, and Witnessing every movement of our Souls, is to let go our dependance upon The Only ROCK of Salvation, and to make Him our Foe, Who would be everlastingly our FRIEND, and eventually to plunge our immortal Souls, which were Given us for the most glorious and exalted of Purposes, into the Abyss of endless horror and Self-condemnation and despair amongst the Devil and his Angels.

St. Luke's narrative is thus: "*I Say unto you, My Friends, (so affectionately did JESUS Address them.) Be not afraid of them, that kill the Body, and after that have no more that they can do! But I will Forewarn you, Whom ye shall fear: Fear Him, Which, after He hath Killed, hath Power to Cast into Hell! Yea, I Say unto you, Fear Him!*"—Chap. xii, 4, 5.

△ "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your FATHER. But the very hairs of your head are all Numbered. Fear ye not therefore! ye are of more value than many sparrows."—29 to 31.

That the Providence of GOD is Universally Comprehensive, when it Pleaseth Him to Exercise It, even beyond the uniformly existing Laws of Order, (co-extensive and commensurate with Creation as these Laws are,) no Christian but believes. By such general Laws so Established, and still Continued by GOD, it may very properly be said, that every Object of Creation, whether great or small, and, consequently, even so seemingly insignificant an one as a sparrow does not fall into the arms of death without The ALMIGHTY'S Knowledge and Permission, if not Appointment; though any particular Exertion of The DIVINE Power One cannot imagine is necessary to such an end. The thought that The Same GOD, Who so Wonderfully Made and hath so Pre-eminently Favoured us, Made also all other Beings, that have life, should weigh with us not to abuse the power over them, with which we are entrusted; not wantonly to destroy, nor treat any with cruelty; since All were doubtless Made for some good end; though the usefulness of Many hath not yet been discovered by Human penetration. The whole and every part of Animated Nature is a never-ceasing Miracle before our eyes from the Wisdom and Power Manifested in the Structure and Preservation of All, and the beauty and fitness of every moving Thing, and of all the faculties and qualities belonging to it: so surprising individually, and still wondrously more so when contemplated in their variety and order. If the life of a sparrow be an Object of The ALMIGHTY'S Benevolent Regard, it is perfectly consistent with an All-Wise and All-Prevailing PROVIDENCE, that every part of our bodily frame, and still more our Soul's state and interest, should be the Subjects of His FATHERLY Care and Consideration: for Man He Formed in His Own Image, an intellectual Being, with an Immortal Spirit, Enduing him with penetration and reflection to understand and appreciate the Works and Mercies of The CREATOR; and notwithstanding the forfeiture by sin of a Paradisaical possession and inheritance, Saved from the interminable effects of such forfeiture by the Incarnation and Intercession of GOD'S Only SON, on repentance and cherishing a lively faith in Him. No pious person, therefore, has any just reason to yield to any ungodly fear, since the whole of the Animal Creation is not so Gifted or Regarded by The FATHER of the Universe as is Man.

St. Luke's narrative is thus: "*Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings? and not one of them is Forgotten before GOD! But even the very hairs of your*

*head are all Numbered. Fear not therefore! ye are of more value than many sparrows.*"—Chap. xii, 6, 7.

"Whosoever, therefore, shall confess Me before Men, him will I Confess also before My FATHER, Which is in Heaven."—32

To fear GOD is to acknowledge with reverence and gratitude Him as SUPREME over All: and to fear Him as becomes us, and as can only be profitable towards the acquisition of His Love, is to obey His Commandments and to confide in His Word. Thus it is effectually to acknowledge His Greatness and Power; since even Devils believe in and tremble at His Name. May we, therefore, be true to our faith, and consistent in our practice, cherishing a holy fear of GOD, and undauntedly confessing Him in CHRIST JESUS before Men, that He may Acknowledge us as His Children, and Appoint us to the Habitations of His Holiness, when, in The Person of CHRIST JESUS, He Comes in the Clouds of Heaven with great Glory to Judge the assembled World, and to Assign to every Human Soul its everlasting Destiny. And Such shall be unspeakably Blessed, whom CHRIST will then Pronounce to have been faithful Followers and Servants of Him and His Cause when on Earth. May we, therefore, as admonished by St. Paul, [Rom x, 9 to 11.] both *confess with our mouths The LORD JESUS, and believe in the heart unto Righteousness*; and we may confidently hope that *we shall be Saved* from the evil to come, and find peace in our Souls; and that *The SON of GOD Himself will confess our names before His FATHER* and before His Angels. [Rev. iii, 5.]

St. Luke's continuation is as follows: "*Also I Say unto you, Whosoever shall confess Me before Men, him shall The SON of Man also Confess before the Angels of GOD.*"—Chap. xii, 8.

"But Whosoever shall deny Me before Men, him will I also Deny before My FATHER, Which is in Heaven."—33.

The denial of CHRIST may be by deed, as well as word; and too frequently is by both: and great as is the wickedness of such rejection of The DIVINELY Appointed Means of Salvation, yet is the folly of it scarcely less so; for not only is the purest peace in this Life destroyed by it; but the hope of an Hereafter is equally blasted. The Atheist and Blasphemer are the willing Victims of their own perverse hearts and haughty and unbending minds. And though we should spurn to be amongst their bold and daring Ranks, let us take heed that we do not deny CHRIST with our hearts, though we may confess Him before Men with our lips; for ever should we bear in mind that The LORD Knoweth and will Make Known every secret of every heart, and that the hope of the Hypocrite must perish. And how unspeakably awful is it to contemplate the Effect of CHRIST'S Denial of the Soul in Eternity, which in the season of probation, and amidst the shortness and uncertainty of the Life that is, would not have Him, with a Sway so Gentle and so Gracious, to Rule over it! Discouraging enough, One should conceive, to a perseverance unto the end in such open denial of the faith in CHRIST JESUS, would be the thought of an exclusion from any after existence even at the end of this Life, short and chequered as it is; but the idea of utter annihilation, though it may be a cherished conjecture of the Atheist, can hardly seriously and unvaryingly be his conviction. And the Immortality of the Soul has support amongst the Wisest of the Heathen, as it has assurance in the hearts of the Believers in CHRIST JESUS.

St. Luke's narrative is: "*But he, that denieth Me before Men, shall be Denied before the Angels of GOD.*"—Chap. xii, 9. *If we deny Him, (JESUS CHRIST,) He also will Deny us!* wrote St. Paul in his 2 Epistle to Timothy ii, 12.

△ "Think not that I am Come to Send peace on Earth! I Came not to Send peace, but a sword: for I am Come to Set a Man at variance against his Father, and the Daughter against her Mother; and the Daughter in law against her Mother in law: and a Man's Foes shall be they of his own Household."—34 to 36.


The Christian state is one of continual warfare, if not with outward, at least with inward Enemies. All its springs and motives of action, and its consistent conduct, are professedly and actually hostile to the pernicious pursuits and pleasures of the Worldly-minded. When CHRIST, therefore, Came into the World, Teaching Righteousness and Holiness of Life, though His Gracious Mission was to Save that World from Satan and from sin: yet was it by the Sword of The SPIRIT, Which is the Word of GOD, that, after a severe Conflict, and by the Willing Offering of His Own Life in the Flesh, He Overcame the Prince of this World. As with The MASTER so with the Servant: through similar opposition from both the World and the Devil, and the additional one of our own inward corruptions and evil propensities, which continually war against the Soul, must we, as good Soldiers of CHRIST, and clad in the whole Armour of DIVINE Appointment, fight our way to the Mansions of Everlasting Peace, which are far above this World, and which we cannot attain unto until this Life is ended; and hence must we expect to find here, (but which happily is not our continuing City,) not peace around us, if it be within us, but a sword, and that one of oppression and persecution.

The effect of this vital opposition to the iniquities and impurities, the weaknesses and vanities of the Carnally-minded and Spiritually-proud, is necessarily to sow division even between Members of the same Family where such contrary principles prevail; for as light cannot exist with darkness, so is observance of the Law of GOD incompatible with a fondness for the ways of the World; nor can any tie of Earthly consanguinity influence a true Christian to forget the paramount duties he owes to his Heavenly FATHER, or to forego an exposure for His Honour, Who Freely Gave him his Being, and every Blessing he enjoys and every hope of peace he possesses. At the same time it is to be borne in mind, that, amidst our Spiritual conflicts with our Fellow-Mortals, no malice, no envy, no ill-will must be suffered to mix up with our resistance to the opposition we experience from Any, even Strangers, and still less from Kindred and close Connections; but, on the contrary, a sober, consistent, upright, and pious course, both of conduct and argument, should be used towards All with whom we have to do, sparing their Persons, but spurning their unhallowed principles; yet manifesting an earnest desire, by patience and perseverance and every effort of Christian fortitude, to turn the hearts of all the Children of Spiritual darkness to the Light of Truth, and to pray even for our Enemies, that they may no longer be in the Ranks of the Evil One, and the Victims willingly of Eternal Destruction; but may, through the Atoning and Propitiating Sacrifice of CHRIST, share in the Efficacy of His Mediation, and become united with us in the bonds of Spiritual peace and holy love; waiting with patience the season of infinitely more joyous Union of Kindred Spirits in the Life to Come.

But our bitterest and most fearful Foes are the evil desires of our own hearts, each one of which woundeth and endangereth the peace of our Immortal Souls; and when under their influence, these Companions of our choice spread the pernicious flame of our bad passions, and, instead of being Friends, as we assume them to be, are most baneful and hostile to our true happiness. The opposition encountered, both by David and Job, from those of their own Household, is a proof of the little dependance to be placed on the friendship of Such as are themselves at enmity with GOD.

St. Luke's narrative is thus: "*I am Come to Send fire on the Earth; and*

*what will I, if it be already kindled? Suppose ye that I am Come to Give Peace on Earth? I Tell you, Nay: but rather division: for from henceforth there shall be Five in one house, divided Three against Two, and Two against Three: the Father shall be divided against the Son, and the Son against the Father; the Mother against the Daughter, and the Daughter against the Mother; the Mother in law against her Daughter in law, and the Daughter in law against her Mother in law.*"—Chap. xii, 49. 51 to 53.

"He, that loveth Father or Mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me: and he, that loveth Son or Daughter more than Me, is not worthy of Me."—37. 

As GOD Freely Giveth all Things, which are excellent, that we either have possessed or do enjoy, and to Him only should we look for every reasonable Blessing in prospect, He having Created us in Mercy and Redeemed us in Love, so should He be The Foremost Object of our truest esteem and sacred affection. And in such a vital estimate of His Worthiness, all other Objects of our regard must, in comparison with Him, be of a very secondary nature; and should be rejected even from that scale of value to us, if they at all interfere with our love and devotedness to Him. Strong, therefore, as the ties of Kindred are, and forcible as they unite us in attachment, yet must they yield to the reverential love we should entertain for Him, Who is The FOUNTAIN both of Love and Life. And, praised be GOD! He hath So Done His Marvellous Works, by mixing so our happiness and our duty, that though our love for Him, to the utmost attainable degree should excel, yet hath he Given us so large a capacity for the exercise of that delightful passion, as that we may truly love our Fathers and our Mothers, our Brothers and our Sisters, and our Neighbours also: and the purer and more beneficial, both to the Objects and to ourselves, it becomes, the more it is tempered by and rendered subservient to the faithful and fervent love of GOD in CHRIST.

In the language of St. Luke he puts this Observation by our SAVIOUR, even in a more striking light, adopting the strongest character of the Hebrew idioms: "*If any Man come to Me, and hate not his Father, and Mother, and Wife, and Children, and Brethren, and Sisters, yea, and his own Life also, he cannot be my Disciple.*"—Chap. xiv, 26. But this must be figuratively understood, and construed only as meaning either the hate of the evil and unspiritualized pursuits of our Kindred or Connections, as evidences of our pure love of CHRIST; or, if we cannot come to CHRIST without discarding our natural Relations, that we should not hesitate doing so, rather than forego the interests of our Immortal Souls, which depend on the continuance of GOD'S Love in CHRIST towards us, and the prevalence of our love for Him.

"And he, that taketh not his cross, and followeth after Me, is not worthy of Me."—38.

To endure persecutions for CHRIST'S Sake, and to devote our life to His Service, and even to be ready to lay it down in His Cause; to encounter temptations and trials with invincible fortitude; to be exposed to the scoffs and revilings of a wicked and degenerate World; and yet to endure in faith and constancy even unto the end, relying on the Providences and Promises of GOD in CHRIST JESUS; to acquiesce in All His Dispensations, grateful for All He Gives, and submissive when He Withholds; patient under afflictions, which, however severe, are not only deserved as Punishments for past offences, but bear no comparison with the depth of Spiritual Agony, which The SON of Man, though Himself without sin, Endured through the manifold and great afflictions heaped upon Him for our sakes and as The SAVIOUR of the World;—This it is to take up One's cross and follow CHRIST: and not to do this is, indeed, not to

be worthy of Him, Who Did so Much for us, that the very contemplation of His Suffering should fill us with perpetual gratitude and devotedness, and is, indeed, Such a Mystery of DIVINE Love to Man, that Angels are unceasingly employed in reflections upon It, without, however, being able fully to understand It.

St. Luke's narrative is thus: "*And Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after Me, cannot be My Disciple.*"—Chap. xiv, 27.

△ "He, that findeth his life, shall lose it: and he, that loseth his life for My Sake, shall find it."—39.

He, that seeketh only for this World's good through all his life, though he find it, yet shall he lose the only Good beyond it: but he, that relinquisheth temporal for Spiritual Good here, though he thus lose a portion of the little and transitory pleasures of this World, shall, for the Sake and through the Merits and Mediation of Him, for Whom and Whose Honour they are abandoned, find a Life of unbroken and perfect peace and joy in the World to Come. The same Gracious Doctrine was Repeated by our SAVIOUR, as recorded in Matt. xvi, 25, and in St. John xii, 23 to 26: JESUS thus Addressing His Disciples, Said, "*The Hour is come, that The SON of Man should be Glorified: Verily, Verily, I Say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He, that loveth his life, shall lose it: and he, that hateth his life in this World, shall keep it unto Life Eternal. If any Man serve Me, let him follow Me! and Where I am, There shall also My Servant be: if any Man serve Me, him will My FATHER Honour.*"

"He, that receiveth you, receiveth Me: and he, that receiveth Me, receiveth Him, That Sent Me."—40.

As CHRIST is The Great FOUNTAIN of Salvation, so are His Disciples and Followers but Streams flowing from That Mighty SOURCE. Whosoever, therefore, receiveth with gladness the Issues from The FOUNTAIN HEAD, receiveth The Virtue of That HEAD also: and Whosoever cherisheth That, honoureth with his heart and his act The LORD of The FOUNTAIN. CHRIST Came to Wash away the stain of sin from our Nature, and to Purify unto Himself a People zealous of good works; thus Reconciling The Offended GOD-HEAD to Pardon and Receive us into The Bosom of Its Favour: Exhorting All, who have faith, to shew it forth in good works, and devotedness to CHRIST, and especially in spreading abroad the glad Tidings of His Gospel; thereby inculcating the love of GOD and the love of our Fellow-Mortals; so that by the Creation of a new heart and a new Spirit in every converted Soul, and in ourselves also, there may, through the Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT, be a fitness for the higher and holier Offices of the Service and Worship of GOD, through CHRIST JESUS, in Heaven. The acceptance, therefore, of the Word of GOD, though communicated only by the Disciples of CHRIST, was virtually the acceptance of CHRIST Himself, and also of The GODHEAD from Which He Descended: and in like manner every believing and converted Soul, who receiveth with gladness the Gospel of CHRIST, receiveth in Spirit The GOD and FATHER of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, by Whom Alone we have Access to The FATHER.

△ "He, that receiveth a Prophet in the name of a Prophet, shall receive a Prophet's Reward: and he, that receiveth a righteous Man in the name of a righteous Man, shall receive a righteous Man's Reward."—41.

To receive, with a heart of benevolence and attachment, the Bearers of the Tidings of GOD'S Peace, His Stewards and Ministers in the Flesh, who are

such also in the spirit, whether Prophets or Preachers, or in whatever character they may approach us, for the sake and through the love of Him, Who is LORD and MASTER of us all, and from Whom every Blessing and the Being we have are derived, is an office of Brotherly love and hospitality, which it should be the desire, as it is thus the appointed duty of each of us to discharge, as we severally have the means and the opportunity: for by so receiving them, we, at the same, time, receive into the heart, with readiness and profitableness, the Ingrafted Word, Which is Able to Save our Souls alive; and Which, through the Enlightening and Animating Grace of GOD, Increaseth and Beareth Fruit, like that of the Prophets and holy Fathers of our Church, some an hundred-fold, some fifty, some ten, even the Fruit that endureth unto Eternal Life: for in the bold language of the Inspired Writer to the Hebrews, *GOD is not Unrighteous to Forget the work and labour of our love, which we may have shewed toward His Name, in that we minister to His Saints on Earth.*—Heb. vi, 10.

“And Whosoever shall give to drink unto One of these Little Ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a Disciple, Verily I Say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his Reward.”—42.

Every disposition to further the Gracious Intentions of GOD, in His Merciful Dispensations to Man, should be sedulously encouraged, and every opportunity of manifesting our zeal for His Service be heartily embraced when presented, and should be even sought for with industry and discernment; and as the motive is the true criterion of the merit or demerit of an act, so the smallest gift benevolently influenced and piously originating, whether it be all we have to give, or all that will be accepted, will be Appreciated infinitely beyond the intrinsic measure of its worth by The Bounteous LORD of All.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: “*Whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in My Name, because ye belong to CHRIST, Verily I Say unto you, he shall not lose his Reward.*”—Chap. ix, 41.

Such is the Gracious Dealing of The GOD of all Love, Who, though we, each and every One of us, owe the Earth and all that it produces to us, the Water, and all that it yields, the Air, and all the sustenance it affords us, to Him, and Him only, yet thus Offers a Heavenly Reward to Any, who gives but a cup of that water to a Christian in need of it, and for the love of CHRIST.

CHAP. xi.—And it came to pass, when JESUS had Made an End of Commanding His twelve Disciples, He Departed thence to Teach and to Preach in their Cities.—1.

The Heavenly SHEPHERD, ever Watchful and Zealous for the Care of His Flock, though having Done already so Much, and Given full Commission and Authority to His Disciples to do in like manner towards the edification and Salvation of Immortal Souls, and to follow His Benevolent Example in all the kindly Offices of Christian Charity, did not Relax His Own Labours of Love; but Persevered even unto the end; Proclaiming the Great Truths of Religion, and Setting Forth the Way to Everlasting Life, through His Own Graciously Offered Mediation for Pardon and Reconciliation to penitent Believers. Himself being our PROPHET and our HIGH PRIEST, as well as KING.

Now when John had heard in the Prison the Works of CHRIST, he sent Two of his Disciples, and said unto Him, “Art Thou He, That should Come? or do we look for Another?”—2, 3.

John, the Forerunner of The SAVIOUR, and, like Him, persecuted even unto death for the Holy Cause, in which he had embarked, seems not, like JESUS,

in the time of temptation and trial to have been wholly deserted by his Followers; but when under bonds and imprisonment to have had his sufferings alleviated by his Disciples still seeking and having access to his presence, and by their faithfulness and devotedness in administering the truest consolation to his Soul, and manifesting an earnest zeal in fulfilling his will and furthering his Heaven-born views. Through them, therefore, though himself confined to the limits of a Prison, the Advancement of The KINGDOM of HEAVEN upon Earth, in the Works of Power and of Love, Which John was told had been openly Shewed in the People's sight, led him to suppose, that The WORKER Thereof was truly The Long-Expected MESSIAH: and Such Goodly Tidings instantly excited in John's anxiously hoping mind, the belief, that The REDEEMER had Come to Visit and Reclaim His People, even That SAVIOUR, Whom John had contemplated as his Heavenly LORD and MASTER, and was prepared to honour and regard with all the loyalty of a faithful Subject, and with all the devotedness of a zealous Worshipper.

St. Luke's narrative of this incident is thus: *And John, calling unto him Two of his Disciples, sent them to JESUS, saying, "Art Thou He, That should Come; or look we for Another?" The Disciples of John, having (as mentioned in the preceding verse) shewed him of All Those Things, Which JESUS had Done.*—Chap. vii, 19. 18.

JESUS Answered and Said unto them, "Go and shew John again Those Things, Which ye do hear and see: The Blind receive their sight, and the Lame walk! the Lepers are Cleansed, and the Deaf hear! the Dead are Raised up, and the Poor have the Gospel Preached to them."—4, 5.

This message of inquiry was at once prudent and respectful. John knew that The HOLY ONE would Answer in the Spirit of Truth and of Holiness. And it was a proof not only of John's faith in the expected MESSIAH, but of the general looking forward to His Coming at this time. By the expression, "*Art Thou He, That should Come; or do we look for Another?*" the term thus standing alone, and unexplained in the face of the interrogatory, renders it obvious that the Advent of A SAVIOUR was then anxiously and confidently calculated upon by this Man of GOD, and by All, who, in the like spirit with him, contemplated the Fulfilment of Prophecy, as running through the Ancient Scriptures, particularly Gen. xlix, 10; Num. xxiv, 17 to 19; Dan. ix, 24, 25; and as acknowledged by the confession thus recorded by St. John in the New Testament: *This is of a truth That PROPHEET, That should Come into the World!*—Chap. vi, 14.


Of the DIVINITY of CHRIST'S Mission, the Power and Benevolence He Displayed in the Works He Performed, and the Doctrine He Taught were the best Assurance; and words of profession are unnecessary to accompany Them. The Answer Confirmed the perfect mutual Understanding between the Baptist and The REDEEMER, as to The PERSON Alluded to in the question.

The Healing of bodily infirmities of a kind too inveterate to yield to Human skill; the Conquest of the grave by restoring to life the Dead; and the last and mightiest Work, as Involving both temporal and eternal Interests, the Preaching the Glad Tidings of Spiritual Peace and Heavenly Hope to them, who were so poor and ignorant as to be without the benefit of previous instruction Thereon, or so lowly in spirit as to be without the confidence of DIVINE Favour; to Elevate the Souls of those, who had, from their youth up, been clouded with Spiritual darkness, and so excluded from the Light of DIVINE Truth and the Prospect of Salvation; to Speak with heart-touching Consolation to the Meek

and Humble-minded, bowed down with a sense of their unworthiness in the Sight of An All-Pure GOD; to Bind up the Broken-hearted and deeply sorrowing Sinner;—These were the Works Which The Blessed JESUS Brought forward in Proof, that it was HE, That should Come, and that None Other should be looked for. And, indeed, so far from any truly pious Soul, and One who felt the need of A SAVIOUR, wishing to look for any Other, there would not, during a life the most vigilant and inquiring, be action and scope enough adequately to admire the Works of Mercy and Love, Which CHRIST Did for Mankind, and still Doeth by His Continually Making Intercession for us, and Teaching us by the Record of His Holy Word: Striving, by the Influence of The HOLY SPIRIT on our hearts, to Bring us unto repentance and holy obedience, that we may be Fitted and Prepared, by His Imputed and Imparted Purity and Righteousness, for an Inheritance with the Saints and Angels in Light and Glory Everlasting.

The Description here given of the Signs of our SAVIOUR'S Advent in the Flesh, had been expressly Pointed to by the finger of Prophecy, when Isaiah declared that, *In That Day should the Deaf hear the Words of the Book, and the eyes of the Blind should see out of obscurity and out of darkness: the Meek also should increase their joy in The LORD; and the Poor among Men should rejoice in The HOLY ONE of Israel: they also that erred in spirit should come to understanding:* [Chap. xxix, 18, 19. 24.] and again, *Be strong, fear not! behold, your GOD will Come: He will Come with a Recompence; and Save you. Then the eyes of the Blind shall be opened; and the ears of the Deaf shall be unstopped: then shall the lame Man leap as an hart; and the tongue of the Dumb sing!* [Chap. xxxv, 4 to 6.] and again, *"I, The LORD, have Called Thee in Righteousness, and will Give Thee for a Covenant of the People, for a Light of the Gentiles, to Open the blind eyes, to Bring out the Prisoners from the Prison, and Them, that sit in darkness, out of the Prison House."*—Chap. xlii, 6, 7.

St. Luke's narrative is thus: *When the Men were come unto Him, they said, "John Baptist hath sent us unto Thee, saying, 'Art Thou He, That should Come; or look we for Another?'" And in the same hour He Cured Many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil Spirits; and unto Many, that were blind, He Gave Sight. Then JESUS Answering, Said unto them, "Go your way, and tell John What Things ye have seen and heard; how that the Blind see, the Lame walk, the Lepers are Cleansed, the Deaf hear, the Dead are raised; to the Poor the Gospel is Preached."*—Chap. vii, 20 to 22.

"And Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in Me!"—6. 

How unspeakably Gracious is This Declaration of our SAVIOUR! how full of the Sublimest Humility, even when Addressed to the faithful and zealous Baptist! but when Extended, as It is, to All of Human Kind, the mind is unable adequately to express its wonder at Such Condescension. To be Blessed, and DIVINELY Blessed, because we are not offended at Him, before Whom the Heavens are not Pure, and Whose Dwelling was from Everlasting, Where Peace and Holy Joy in Perfection Prevail, and yet Who Descended to 'Take our Nature that He might Reclaim it from endless perdition; how wrapt in mystery is Such Unmerited, Such Transcendant Goodness! Inconceivable it may seem, that All, who heard the Gracious Words Proceeding out of His Mouth, and saw the Wondrous and Charitable Works of His Power, did not at once hail Him LORD of Life and all Things, and bless Him for His Mercy: but that Any should take offence at Him, Who so Went about Doing Good, and Spake with Such Wisdom as never Man spake, is a continuing surprise, doubtless, to Angels: and still is



the Cross an offence to the Proud in spirit, and the Foolish in heart. Indeed, so frail is the heart of Man, so weak is it in faith, and so unwilling in practice; so devoted to Worldly considerations and carnal inclinations, that but to Few, very Few, is the Spotless Life of CHRIST the object of admiration and imitation. May we, however, who have, alas! given Him but too much cause to be Offended at us for our past perverseness and ingratitude, henceforth unremittingly strive not to offend Him any more, that we, with all His faithful Followers, may, through His Merits and Mercies, have all our offences Blotted out, and be Blessed by Him in Heavenly Places.

St. Luke's account exactly accords with the Text, and is thus: "*And Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in Me!*"—Chap. vii, 23.

△ And as they departed, JESUS Began to Say unto the Multitudes concerning John, "What went ye out into the Wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind? But what went ye out for to see? A Man clothed in soft raiment? behold, they that wear soft clothing are in Kings' houses. But what went ye out for to see? A Prophet?"—7 to the half of 9.

It was natural that the mission of John to CHRIST should have been a circumstance of general observation amongst the Attendants on the Latter: and the preaching of John having pointed to the Advent of A SAVIOUR, and of the KINGDOM of HEAVEN into the hearts of All, who, by penitence and faith, would come unto Him, it was equally reasonable to expect, and seasonable to find, JESUS Embracing the opportunity to Enlarge on the Tendency of His Own Great Object in Coming, by inducing to a right estimate of the Character and qualities of His faithful Forerunner: His first Question was as to the motive that induced them to attend to the preaching of John; and He immediately Engrafts Another in figurative language upon It; implying an inquiry either as to what, if any thing more than the most common purpose of curiosity, had attracted them from their homes to the chosen retirement of the Baptist; or rather if they had not been impelled by an eagerness to catch at any new system of Religion or Philosophy, and seeking to be carried about with any wind of doctrine. Still Remaining unanswered, JESUS Continues His Interrogations; and Asks, if simply, from the peculiarity of his habits in his food and clothing, their desire arose to seek out John in his recess. To this Question our SAVIOUR Himself Furnishes the Answer that worldly consideration would present, by stating that the Kingly and Lordly residences would rather gratify such a curiosity. At length a nearer Approach is Made to the Object He had in View in Such a Train of Inquiry and Discussion, by Arousing the attention of the Bystanders to the holy office of a Prophet, an Especial Messenger from GOD.

St. Luke's narrative is as follows: *And when the Messengers of John were departed, He Began to Speak unto the People concerning John, "What went ye out into the Wilderness for to see? A reed shaken with the wind? But what went ye out for to see? A Man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they, which are gorgeously apparelled, and live delicately, are in Kings' Courts. But what went ye out for to see? A Prophet?"*—Chap. vii, 24 to 26.

"Yea, I Say unto you, and more than a Prophet! For this is he, of whom it is Written, [Mal. iii, 1.] 'Behold, I Send My Messenger before Thy Face, which shall prepare Thy Way before Thee.' Verily I Say unto you, Among them, that are born of Women, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist."—Half of 9 to the half of 11.

Many Prophets had there been in Israel, and in their preachings and sayings, as left on record, and revealing the Great Purposes of GOD, did the hearts


of the People rejoice. But John had an Office Assigned of the highest possible dignity for Man to hold, and Which Appointed him to awaken attention to the approaching Fulfilment of the highest aim of Prophecy, even the Adoption of Man's Nature by GOD to Raise it from its fallen state, and to Fit it for the Holiness of Heaven. And as it had been predicted of John by his sainted Earthly Father, he did give knowledge of Salvation by the Remission of sin on repentance, and turning to the Face of The LORD and His ANOINTED.

St. Luke's continuation is thus: "*Yea, I Say unto you, and much more than a Prophet. This is he, of whom it is Written, 'Behold, I Send My Messenger before Thy Face, which shall prepare Thy Way before Thee.' For I Say unto you, Among those, that are born of Women, there is not a greater Prophet than John the Baptist.*"—Chap. vii, half of 26 to half of 28.

"Notwithstanding, He, that is Least in the KINGDOM of HEAVEN, is Greater than he."—Half of 11.

Greatest among the truly Great and Good and Chosen of GOD in the Earth as was John thus Acknowledged by The SON of GOD to be, yet it seems he, though thus Selected as the Forerunner to prepare the Way for The HOLY ONE of Israel, and to break the glad Tidings of Salvation to all Believers, as the Dawn of The SUN of RIGHTEOUSNESS Opening upon their sight, was, when compared by The JUDGE of all Men, less than the humblest Inmate of HEAVEN: such have been the sad and deplorable effects of Man's fall, and the necessity of some Means of Reconciliation to GOD beyond what Man Himself could offer, that even the indisputably Best among us could not hope for Admission into HEAVEN but through That Mediation, Which He, of Whom John preached, hath Graciously Assumed. Compared even with the state of purity and innocence that prevailed in Paradise, when our first Earthly Parents held high and holy converse, without fear and trembling, with The MOST HIGH, the State of Celestial Purity and Holiness is inconceivably greater. What an exalted and becoming idea does this raise, in the mind, of the Perfection of Those, that live in perpetual communion with the Sanctities of HEAVEN! that even John the Baptist, the Peculiar Favourite of GOD, zealous and faithful unto the end as he was in pursuing the Great Work he was Appointed to do, full of the highest wisdom, temperate in all things, exemplifying the faith he inculcated in Others, bold in the discharge of every duty devolving on him, even at the hazard of his life, having at once set his hand to the plough and never turning back therefrom, patient under sufferings, and of whom all that is Recorded in Holy Writ tends to edify, and to exalt him in our reverence, should be unfit, without the Righteousness of CHRIST Imputed to Him, for the Society of Angels and the Habitations of Eternal Blessedness. This may be one ground for believing in the Refining and Purifying Influence of The HOLY SPIRIT upon the Human Soul, after its separation from the mortal, and before its union with the Spiritual Body, so as to qualify it for the inconceivable Brightness of the Glories and Excellence of the Visual Presence of JEHOVAH amidst all the Host of Heaven.

St. Luke's narrative adds: "*But he, that is Least in the KINGDOM of GOD, is Greater than he.*"—Chap. vii, half of 28.

"And from the days of John the Baptist until now the KINGDOM of HEAVEN Suffereth violence; and the Violent take It by force. For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John."—12, 13. 

In every stage, Christianity, meek in Righteousness, but bold against the

sins of the World, has had to encounter the World's opposition; when offering its lowly and pride-subduing supplication for admission into the KINGDOM of HEAVEN. Even in the early days of Its Great AUTHOR'S Appearance in the Flesh, and when Its Holy Truths and Heavenly Objects were promulgated by John, It suffered the severest violence by the imprisonment and final assassination of this Greatest of GOD'S Servants, who had sprung from Woman. The concluding passage in the 12th verse of the Text, wrapt as it is in the language of metaphor, is not without difficulty as it stands in the Text; but on reference to the corresponding passage in the Gospel according to St. Luke, considerable light is thrown upon our SAVIOUR'S probable Meaning: for it is there Recorded of This Address of our SAVIOUR, that He Said, "*The Law and the Prophets were until John; since that time the KINGDOM of GOD is Preached; and every Man presseth into It.*"—Chap. xvi, 16. In the sense given of It by St. Matthew, the restless and daring opposition presented to the Influence of the KINGDOM of HEAVEN on the hearts of those, who first received the Word of GOD with gladness, and in time of temptation fell away; and from whom, therefore, the KINGDOM of HEAVEN may be said to have been taken by force, may probably be meant: in that given by St. Luke, it should seem to imply the Universal Spread of CHRIST'S KINGDOM, by the Power which attended the preaching of His Word, and which drew a large proportion, at least, of the unprejudiced Hearers unto It, from a conviction of the DIVINITY of The PREACHER and the Saving Efficacy of The Doctrine.

John spake not by types and figures, as the Generality of Prophets before him had done; but he spake openly and plainly of the immediate Coming of A MESSIAH, and of the indispensable qualification of repentance for a fitness and preparation for the KINGDOM of HEAVEN, Which he unhesitatingly avowed to be *at hand*. And so it was, that our SAVIOUR Characterized John as *more than a Prophet*.

"And if ye will receive it, This is Elias, which was for to come. He, that hath ears to hear, let him hear!"—14, 15.

By the Prophet Malachi it is said, as The Word of JEHOVAH: "*Behold, I will Send you Elijah, the Prophet, before the Coming of the Great and Dreadful Day of The LORD; and he shall turn the heart of the Fathers to the Children, and the heart of the Children to their Fathers.*"—Chap. iv, 5, 6. And to this Prophecy, as Fulfilled in John, did the Angel, that addressed his Father Zacharias, thus allude at his birth: "*Many of the Children of Israel shall he turn to The LORD, their GOD; and he shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias to turn the hearts of the Fathers to the Children, and the Disobedient to the wisdom of the Just; to make ready a People prepared for The LORD.*"—Luke i, 16, 17.

This forcible way of expressing the importance of the Subject, and of the attention that should be directed to it, as involving Everlasting Interests, is repeatedly used, not only by our SAVIOUR, but by His favourite Apostle St. John.

In the narrative by St. Luke, the Doctrine of the Gospel, as Foreshadowed in The DIVINE Law, is thus, even with deeper character, pressed on the consideration: "*It is easier for Heaven and Earth to pass, than one tittle of the Law to fail.*"—Chap. xvi, 17.

ut whereunto shall I Liken this Generation? It is like unto Children sitting in the Markets, and calling unto their Fellows, and saying, 'We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced: we have mourned unto you; and ye have not lamented!' for John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He hath a Devil.' The SON of Man Came Eating and Drinking, and they say, 'Behold, a Man gluttonous, and a Wine-bibber, a Friend of Publicans and Sinners!'—16 to three-quarters of 19.

Struck with the perverseness and obduracy of Those, who were alike affected by the Spiritualized preaching and holy living of John, and by the wonder-working Power, and Gracious Words That Proceeded out of His Own Mouth, CHRIST Takes up a characteristic simile to expose their prejudice and their pride, resembling them to heedless and inconsiderate Children, who, in the city and frivolity and obstinacy of their heart, reject all invitation and encouragement to surrender their Self-will and their judgment by rejoicing with them that rejoice in due season, and by weeping with them that weep with a holy and becoming sorrow. Since, like such headstrong and ungovernable children, they rejected John, who came to them in fasting, humiliation and prayer, and in all abstemiousness, and mortification, and Self-denial, that he might awaken them to a deep sense of Holy Things, and convince them of the fitness of their own hearts, through the corruption of their own Nature, and their willing surrender of themselves to evil habits, for the Purity of the KINGDOM of HEAVEN. And in the same Spirit of wilful blindness to their Everlasting Interest, they put from them The SON of GOD, and would have none of him, though He Came to them in the Robe of Righteousness, and with the fulness of a Bridegroom out of his chamber to Espouse the Church Militant on Earth, and to Win to His Bosom of Love and of Peace the Children of Men. John, for the rigour of his rules was repudiated, under the imputation of being actuated by an evil Spirit: his LORD and MASTER, from His Benevolent Readiness to Place Himself Where He could best Accomplish the Work of doing Good and Saving Souls alive, was charged with intemperance, because bound with Such as had habitually lent themselves to excessive indulgence, and, therefore, most needed The PHYSICIAN to their Souls. To such miserable subterfuges are Envy and Detraction reduced! thus contradictory and inconsistent with themselves; and thus, in the height of Human folly and absurdity, casting from them the Only True Balm of Comfort in affliction, and the only substantial joy of the heart, in the prospect of Pardon and Acceptance with GOD, and the hope of Endless Bliss in Heaven.

St. Luke introductorily enlarges upon This. For after drawing the comparison between the Greatest upon Earth and the Least in Heaven, in reference to the SAVIOUR'S Forerunner, he adds, *And all the People, that heard Him, and the Publicans justified GOD, being baptized with the baptism of John: but the Pharisees and Lawyers rejected the Counsel of GOD against themselves, being not baptized of him. And The LORD Said, "Whereunto then shall I Liken the ten of this Generation? And to what are they like? They are like unto Children sitting in the Market Place, and calling One to Another, and saying, 'We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept.' for John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, 'He hath a Devil:' The SON of Man is Come Eating and Drinking, and ye say, 'Behold, a gluttonous Man, and a Wine-Bibber, a Friend of Publicans and Sinners!'"*—Luke vii, 28 to 34.

"But Wisdom is Justified of her Children."—A quarter of 19.

The Conduct both of John and of CHRIST, Differing in these respects, as they did, though having the same Gracious Object in view, namely, the Salvation

of Souls by the Opening of the KINGDOM of HEAVEN to all Believers, was perfectly Consistent with Infinite Wisdom: the sobriety of John's life accorded best with the humble view he took of himself, when contrasted with the infinitely higher Value at which he estimated That of his Great LORD and MASTER; and it was well calculated to awaken a spirit of humility in Others, which was indeed the most needed in the Jewish character of that day; it gave dignity to his preaching, which, with baptism, was his peculiar Office: for it was not Given to him to work Miracles. But the Omnipotence, Which CHRIST Possessed, He occasionally Manifested in Corroboration of His Doctrine; though Those Manifestations were only in Furtherance of His Good Will to Man: Seeking by all Means to Convert Sinners from the errors of their ways, and to Lead them to the adoption of That Salvation, Which faith in Him and in His Righteousness could alone warrant the hope of attaining. Our SAVIOUR'S Consciousness of the Efficacy that would attend His Intercourse even with Publicans and Sinners, and the Conviction that their hearts were more susceptible of truly DIVINE Impressions, when brought to a sense of sin and of sorrow for its commission, than those of the Spiritually Proud and Self-righteous, Justified JESUS in Mixing occasionally with these Outcasts of those Self-Approvers. For, as St. LUKE has it, "*Wisdom is Justified of all her Children.*"—Chap. vii, 35.

△ Then Began He to Upbraid the Cities, wherein Most of His Mighty Works were Done, because they repented not! "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! Woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the Mighty Works, Which were Done in you, had been Done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I Say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the Day of Judgment, than for you! And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto Heaven, shalt be brought down to Hell; for if the Mighty Works, Which have been Done in thee, had been Done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day: but I Say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the Land of Sodom in the Day of Judgment, than for thee!"—20 to 24.

That The Everlasting GOD in the Human Form should Offer Peace and Salvation to His Fallen Creatures, and be Rejected; that He should Condescend to Bear with their unbelief, to Compassionate their wilful ignorance, and to Perform amongst them Such Works, and to Pour forth Such Words as never Man did, and still be Set at nought and Scorned, and be disdainfully Treated, could not but excite Reproof even from the Meek and Lowly JESUS. But it was Reproof in the spirit of Meekness and Love, Extending with It towards His Hearers still Further Admonition in the Warning of the awful consequences awaiting protracted guilt and unbelief.


Of the character of the Inhabitants of Chorazin we are left only to conjecture, or of the frequency of our SAVIOUR'S Visits there; since this and the corresponding passage in St. Luke x, 13, are the only places wherein notice is taken of it either in the Old or New Testament. But Bethsaida, like another Sodom, seems to have had even more than another Lot within it; for of it, the Apostles, Philip and Andrew and Peter were Natives; it being Recorded by St. John, that *Philip was of Bethsaida, the City of Andrew and Peter.*—John i, 44, and xii, 21. But such was the impiety, such the infidelity of the People, that when they brought to Him a blind Man, whom He Cured, JESUS having previously Taken him out of the Town of Bethsaida, Commanded him to go in privacy to his own home, Saying to him, "*Go neither into the Town, nor tell it to Any in the Town.*"—Mark viii, 26. *In a Desert Place belonging to that City did the People follow JESUS; and there He Received them, and Spake unto them of the KINGDOM of GOD; and Healed them, that had need of healing:* Luke ix, 10, 11.] and there it was, in that Wilderness, that He Miraculously Fed the Five Thousand People

with five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but yet it should seem so hardened were their hearts, so selfish and sensual and unspiritualized their feelings and affections, that the Great and Gracious Works Wrought among them were set at nought by them as Warnings and Admonitions; and so did they expose themselves to this heavy Denunciation of The DIVINE Displeasure. [See the remarks on a similar Denunciation at verse 15 of Chapter x.]

And let us not think that Capernaum is alone Recorded in the Registry of Heaven for being, in the opinion of its Inhabitants, exalted, as it were, unto Heaven for greatness and power, but which, through the transgression and impiety of its People, shall be brought down to Hell: for though the People of other Cities or Towns may not have rejected The Person of JESUS, not having witnessed His Bodily Presence; yet if they have despised His Word, and set at nought both His Counsel and His Love, shutting perversely their eyes against The DIVINE Light He Shed, and their ears against The DIVINE Truths He Bequeathed; addicting themselves to work iniquity with greediness, bidding defiance to The Living GOD, despising His Forbearance and Mercies, and making light of His Gracious Promises, the Same awful Fate may be Impending over or Reserved for them. And this has been the conduct not of Individuals only, but of Nations, even as well as Cities in the aggregate; and though the occasional Warnings of desolation by earthquake and tempest and famine, have been Superadded to the recorded Instances of DIVINE Chastisement in the Bible, yet have they continued in sin until the measure of their iniquity has been filled up. And consistently with the Just Judgment of The MOST HIGH, when the Great Day of That Judgment Arrives, a Sentence of Deeper Infliction will be Visited upon Such as have sinned against a proportionately larger Measure of Spiritual Knowledge and Means of Salvation, than Sodom and Gomorrha, against which Cities such Proofs of The ALMIGHTY'S Displeasure were so signally and exemplarily Displayed.

According to St. Luke, even the rejection of the Disciples of CHRIST Endangered the experience of Everlasting Condemnation, for thus does this Evangelist relate that our SAVIOUR Addressed His Chosen Followers, when Sending them forth to preach the Doctrine of Salvation through Him: "*Into whatsoever City ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the Streets of the same, and say, 'Even the very dust of your City, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you.' But I Say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable in that Day for Sodom, than for that City. Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the Mighty Works had been Done in Tyre and Sidon, Which have been Done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the Judgment, than for you! And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to Heaven, shalt be thrust down to Hell. He, that heareth you, heareth Me; and he, that despiseth you, despiseth Me; and he, that despiseth Me, despiseth Him that Sent Me.*"—Chap. x, 10 to 16.

How great must be the measure of such a City's iniquity, if in the Day of Universal Judgment by A Righteous and Just GOD, even Sodom, immersed as it was in the most unholy affections and the most rank and execrable propensities, shall be brought, comparatively, within the Pale of Salvation, whilst the other City shall be excluded!!

At that time JESUS Answered and Said, "I Thank Thee, O FATHER, LORD of Heaven and Earth, because Thou hast Hid These Things from the Wise and Prudent, and hast Revealed Them unto Babes; even so, FATHER; for So it Seemed Good in Thy Sight."—25, 26. 

It is Spiritual pride that seems most offensive to HEAVEN: that pride which the inflating wisdom of the World but too generally begets, and which is

in principle the most opposite to the pure and meek and humble spirit of a Christian. GOD, therefore, Who is no Respector of Persons, in the Infallibility of His Wisdom, Turns from the Self-sufficient Professor of righteousness, and Directs His Care to those, who are not wise in their own conceit, but who, in the consciousness of their unworthiness, and, in the singleness of their hearts, flee unto Him for Wisdom and Righteousness, as well as Sanctification and Redemption; knowing assuredly that it is He Alone, Who Giveth Wisdom unto the Simple, and Sheweth forth His Strength in their weakness. *The preaching of the Cross is, to the Haughty and Vainglorious, foolishness; but unto them, that lay hold of It, is It the Power of GOD unto Salvation.* In adoption of the preaching of Job v, 12, 13; of Isaiah xxix, 14, xxx, 18, xlv, 25; and Jeremiah viii, 9, ix, 23, St. Paul, in his 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, thus recalled their remembrance to the Words Used by JEHOVAH, when He Said, "*I will Destroy the wisdom of the Wise, and will Bring to nothing the understanding of the Prudent.*" From which the Apostle drew the following reasoning: *Where is the Wise? Where is the Scribe? Where is the Disputer of this World? Hath not GOD Made foolish the wisdom of this World? For after that in the Wisdom of GOD the World by wisdom knew not GOD, it Pleased GOD by the foolishness of Preaching, to Save them that believe: For the Jews require a Sign; and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach CHRIST Crucified; unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness: but unto them, which are Called both Jews and Gentiles, CHRIST, the Power of GOD, and the Wisdom of GOD; because the Foolishness of GOD is Wiser than Men, and the Weakness of GOD is Stronger than Men: for ye (addressing personally his correspondents,) see your Calling, Brethren, how that not many wise Men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are Called: but GOD hath Chosen the foolish Things of the World to Confound the Wise; and GOD hath Chosen the weak Things of the World to Confound the Things which are mighty, and base Things of the World, and Things, which are despised, hath GOD Chosen; yea, and Things, which are not, to Bring to nought things that are; that no Flesh should glory in His Presence, But of Him are ye in CHRIST JESUS, Who of GOD is Made unto us Wisdom and Righteousness and Sanctification and Redemption; that according as it is Written, "He that glorieth, let him glory in The LORD!"—1 Cor. i, 18 to 31. "Let him, that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I Am The LORD, Which Exercise Loving-Kindness, Judgment and Righteousness in the Earth: for in these Things I Delight," Saith The LORD.—Jerem. ix, 24.*

To the Wise and Prudent in their own conceit alone, and Such as preferred the dazzling glitter of Vanity and Self-importance to the sober rays and direction of simple Truth and DIVINE Light, was the Wisdom of the Word of GOD darkened and overshadowed with a veil; like the Cloud of Supernatural appearance, which, though a Pillar of guiding and animating fire to the faithful Israelites, was a mist of impenetrable and confounding dimness to the Egyptians, owing to the profligacy and impiety, and persecuting malice and insatiate cruelty and oppression of the Latter.

St. Luke's narrative is thus: *In that hour JESUS Rejoiced in Spirit, and Said, "I Thank Thee, O FATHER, LORD of Heaven and Earth, that Thou hast Hid these Things from the Wise and Prudent; and hast Revealed them unto Babes: even so, FATHER; for So it Seemed Good in Thy Sight."*—Luke x, 21.

This Appeal from JESUS, as The SON of Man, to The GODHEAD, as His SPIRITUAL FATHER, gives a peculiar impressiveness to the duty of humiliation and reverential fear in Mankind's approaches to the faithful worship of their GOD and SAVIOUR.

"All Things are Delivered unto Me of My FATHER; and no Man knoweth The SON, but The FATHER; neither knoweth any Man The FATHER, save The SON, and he, to whomsoever The SON will Reveal Him."—27. △

Though as GOD, CHRIST is Inseparable from The FATHER, yet as Man, by having Adopted the Manhood into The GODHEAD, He is Distinguishable from Him and The HOLY SPIRIT. In the Character, therefore, of Man, Taken into The GODHEAD, is CHRIST to be understood as Having all Power Delivered to Him of The FATHER: for as is recorded by the Evangelist St. John, *The FATHER Loveth The SON, and hath Given all Things into His Hand*: [John iii, 35.] and happy indeed is it for us that He, Who so Loved us as to Give Himself for us, should thus still have the Power, as He still hath the Will to Save us, if we will but seek unto Him for Salvation. The comprehension of the Union of GOD and Man does not belong to Man, and even Angels desire to look into that Great Mystery; but to The GODHEAD It is quite Familiar in all Its Bearings. Yet hath Man imparted to him, if of a believing heart and of a teachable Spirit, a sufficient acquaintance with the Works and Ways of JEHOVAH, in His Condescending Relationship to Man, to enable him to worship, serve and obey GOD, and to trust in His Holy Name and Word. Our SAVIOUR Himself Amplified more on this Subject, on another Occasion, as is thus recorded by St. John: *JESUS Lifted up His Eyes to Heaven, and Said, "FATHER, the Hour is come! Glorify Thy SON, that Thy SON also may Glorify Thee! As Thou hast Given Him Power over all Flesh, that He should Give Eternal Life to as Many as Thou hast Given Him: and this is Life Eternal, that they might know Thee, The Only True GOD, and JESUS CHRIST, Whom Thou hast Sent. I have Glorified Thee on Earth; I have Finished the Work Which Thou Gavest Me to Do: and now, O FATHER, Glorify Thou Me with Thine Own SELF, with the Glory Which I Had with Thee before the World was. I have Manifested Thy Name unto the Men, which Thou Gavest Me out of the World: Thine they were; and Thou Gavest them Me; and they have kept Thy Word: now they have known that all Things, Whatsoever Thou hast Given Me, are of Thee; for I have Given unto them the Words, Which Thou Gavest Me; and they have received Them; and have known surely that I Came out from Thee; and they believed that Thou didst Send Me."*—John xvii, 1 to 8. And at another time, the same Evangelist relates that JESUS thus Said, "*No Man can come to Me, except The FATHER, Which hath Sent Me, Draw him. Every Man, that hath heard, and hath learned of The FATHER, cometh unto Me. Not that any Man hath seen The FATHER, save He, Which is of GOD: He hath Seen The FATHER.*"—John vi, 44 to 46. To which essential Doctrine of Christianity the Evangelist himself, as from the impression of his own conviction, thus bears testimony: *No Man hath seen GOD at any time; The Only Begotten SON, Which is in the Bosom of The FATHER, He hath Declared Him.*"—John i, 18. The knowledge of GOD, thus only attainable through CHRIST, is yet always Given, and will continue to be Freely Given unto All, whose hearts are open and willing to receive It.

St. Luke's narrative is thus: "*All Things are Delivered to Me of My FATHER: and no Man knoweth Who The SON is, but The FATHER; and Who The FATHER is, but The SON, and he, to whom The SON will Reveal Him.*"—Chap. x, 22.

'Come unto Me All ye that labour and are heavy laden! and I will Give you Rest. Take My Yoke upon you, and learn of Me! for I am Meek and Lowly in Heart; and ye shall find Rest unto your Souls. For My Yoke is easy; and My Burden is light.'"—28 to 30. △

How Gracious and Benevolent is This Invitation of The Blessed JESUS!



All, who labour under a Self-condemning sense of their guilt, and are weighed down to the dust with its pressure; feeling and confessing their unworthiness in the Sight of A Perfect and Pure GOD; that they have forfeited all just claim to His Favour; and would be without hope of Everlasting Rest in the Bosom of His Peace, if It were not Freely Offered, and had not been Fully Purchased by the Incarnation and Intercession of The SON of GOD. And who, of all Mankind, has not need of the Rest here so mercifully Promised? for who doth not bear about him a load of iniquity, from which no other means of being relieved present themselves but by laying it on The All-Patient JESUS, Who will not only Endure the weight and Bear both the shame and the punishment thereof; but Insure us, as the Recompense of our faith, a Heavenly Sabbath after our labour of Life is ended.

In exchange for the intolerable yoke of sin, under which Mankind is groaning, The Merciful REDEEMER Recommends the Mild Yoke of His Discipline of Love, and attention to His DIVINE Precepts, namely, to serve GOD truly with the heart and in the Spirit, and to be in love and charity with all Men; reposing our trust on the Atoning Sacrifice of That SAVIOUR of all penitent Believers, and seeking, by supplication and prayer, the Guiding and Governing Influence of The HOLY SPIRIT: humble, patient, and resigned, after the Example of our DIVINE LORD and MASTER; bending submissively to the All-wise and All-merciful Dispensations of our HEAVENLY FATHER, and confiding implicitly in His Holy Word and Endearing Promises. Thus with Souls Chastened by sorrow for past sin; humbled by Self-condemnation; yet Sustained with the hope and Assurance of Pardon and Reconciliation in CHRIST JESUS, we shall, in the end at least, find That Rest, which all the power and malice of the Evil One cannot disturb; a Rest consecrated to The LORD of the Sabbath in the Mansions of Eternal Blessedness.

When fairly yoked to the service of CHRIST the toil yields the most heart-felt and lasting delight, and so easy is it that it will suit all ages and conditions of Human Nature: so light also is His Burden, that the feeblest and most infantine loins can ably bear It, and, indeed, would acquire strength and firmness from Its pressure. To act as under the Eye of The ALMIGHTY, to speak as into His Ear, to think or regulate our thoughts, as instantly Read in our hearts, is not a difficult task, if Men would but take it upon them; and try the motives of conduct by the test of seeking to please A Good and All-Gracious GOD, on Whom our continuance here, and our condition in Eternity depend, is indeed not a heavy burden: since He, as A GOD of the Tenderest Compassion, has Revealed to us the Blessed Tendency of His Laws, and has Made the observance of our duty the source of the purest and most heart-felt delight. May we, therefore, strive to become both faithful and diligent Servants of so Gracious A LORD and MASTER, and with all the zeal of a lively faith, and all the patience of a persevering hope, so labour in our Christian Vocation, that we may find the true Rest to our Souls, when He Comes to Give His Labourers their Hire, and the good and faithful Servant his Reward; but will Cast out the unprofitable Servant into Darkness, impervious and unabating, and where shall be Woe, Woe, Woe, unutterable and without end.

△ CHAP. xii.—At that time, JESUS Went on the Sabbath Day through the corn: and His Disciples were an hungered, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat: But when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto Him, "Behold, Thy Disciples do that, which is not lawful to do upon the Sabbath Day!"—1, 2.

The Disciples of CHRIST had left all to follow Him: not for their own sakes only, but that they might be Instruments in His Hand of great good to

the Souls of Others: and so far from seeking to profit in a worldly point of view from the distinguished Offices they so laboriously and successfully filled, they willingly submitted, as occasion offered, to work in their vocation, in order to minister to their necessities. On the present occasion, when the presence of the Sabbath forbade the having recourse to labour, they, impelled by the cravings of hunger, were reduced to the necessity of taking the ears of corn growing in a field through which they passed; expecting, probably, that no other opportunity of taking food might offer in the course of the day, and not improbably they might have been for some time on the day previous to the Sabbath without nourishment: as fasting through the Sabbath is usual with the Jews; but then, in general custom, they eat abundantly on the day preceding. In the Mosaic Dispensation, some sanction for the act of the Disciples is thus offered: *When thou comest into the standing corn of thy Neighbour; then thou mayest pluck the ears with thine hand.*—Deut. xxiii, 25. In the present instance, the offence taken at the conduct of the Disciples by the Spiritually-proud Pharisees was not singly at the taking the corn, but the taking it on the Sabbath Day. And this shews with what invidious eagerness they sought to find fault with CHRIST or His Followers; totally indifferent to the Goodly Counsel He Delivered, and the Work of DIVINE Grace He had Entered upon.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And it came to pass, that He (JESUS) Went through the corn fields on the Sabbath Day; and His Disciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears of corn. And the Pharisees said unto Him, "Behold, why do they, on the Sabbath Day, that which is not lawful?"*—Chap. ii, 23, 24.

St. Luke's is thus: *And it came to pass, on the second Sabbath after the first, that He Went through the corn fields: and His Disciples plucked the ears of corn, and did eat, rubbing them in their hands. And Certain of the Pharisees said unto them, "Why do ye that, which is not lawful to do on the Sabbath Days?"*—Chap. vi, 1, 2.

With what indefatigable vigilance do these Hypocrites seem to have watched every Action and Movement of CHRIST and His Followers, with the purpose, not to form an unprejudiced and just judgment of them, and to weigh, calmly and deliberately, whether The True MESSIAH had Come, and the KINGDOM of HEAVEN, therefore, was at hand or not; but rather to seek, with greediness, occasion for reprovings and revilings, and to gather to themselves the praise and service of Men: Men in the seats of abused power; rather than to win the Souls of the numberless Poor to the worship and faith of The True GOD: their zeal being, not to establish the Truth, as proclaimed by the Prophets, but to drown Its Voice; and by cunning and persecution to subvert That Doctrine, Which CHRIST Taught, and Which Struck at the root of their Spiritual pride and Self-righteousness; but Which was Grounded in the Spirit of the Mosaic Dispensation, and in Fulfilment of the Great Purpose of Prophecy.

But He Said unto them, "Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungered, and they that were with him? How he entered into the House of GOD, and did eat the Shew Bread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them, which were with him; but only for the Priests? Or have ye not read in the Law, how that on the Sabbath Days the Priests in the Temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless? But I Say unto you, That in this Place is ONE Greater than the Temple."—3 to 6.

The example of David, the Boast of the Jews in all after ages, should have been equally present to the minds of the Pharisees, as an extenuation at least, if not a justification of the Disciples: but though, like Satan in his temptation of CHRIST, they could quote the Law to further their unhallowed purposes; they

unblushingly suppressed what they knew to be of DIVINE Authority, as contained in their Scriptures, because it opposed their assumption. The peculiar character and construction of the Shew Bread, and its appointment to the use of the High Priest and his Descendants or Successors, are detailed in Levit. xxiv, 5 to 9; viii, 32; Exod. xxv, 30; xxix, 32, 33; and the historical incident alluded to by our SAVIOUR is thus given in 1 Sam. xxi, 2 to 6.

In the prayer of Solomon at the Consecration of the Temple he had erected for the Worship of The GOD of Israel, he breaks out into this fine strain of devotional eloquence: after drawing in his mind a comparison between the grandest of Earthly things and the utmost stretch of Human power and skill, with the Glory of GOD, Who Created both the Earth and the Heavens, and is Supreme over All, he asks himself, *But will GOD in very deed Dwell with Men on the Earth? Behold, Heaven and the Heaven of Heavens cannot Contain Him; how much less this House, which I have built?*—2 Chron. vi, 18. And the Prophetic Evidence, which Malachi had given of A Greater Presence and a more Worthy Object of Reverence Eventually Coming upon Earth than this Temple, (which was One of the Wonders of the World,) thus Adverted to by JESUS, and Applied to Himself as The SON of GOD, is thus Recorded by the Prophet in the Words of JEHOVAH Himself: "*Behold, The LORD, Whom ye seek, shall suddenly Come to His Temple, even The MESSENGER of The Covenant: behold, He shall Come!*" *Saith The LORD of HOSTS.*—Mal. iii, 1. By JESUS, as The WORD of GOD and as GOD, according to St. John's designation of Him at the opening of his Record of The Gospel, was the whole Earth Made, and All that therein is was the Work of His Almighty Hand: Glorious, therefore, to Human eye, as was this Temple of the Wisest of Mankind and the most magnificent of Earthly Kings; yet was it as nothing, when contrasted with the Temple of CHRIST'S Body, Wherein the Sacrifice of Atonement for the sins of a whole World was Effectually and Freely to be Offered.

"But if ye had known what This Meaneth, 'I will Have Mercy, and not Sacrifice!' ye would not have condemned the Guiltless: For The SON of Man is LORD even of the Sabbath Day."—7, 8.

The rigid observance of the mere formal and ceremonious part of an Institution, and the total neglect or rejection of its spirit and avowed or obvious import, is, even to unassisted Reason dispassionately exercised, admissively wrong and unprofitable: to contend, however, for the mere letter of the Mosaic Law, without acknowledging the Power of A GREATER LAW-GIVER than Moses to Abrogate that Law, or to Give it a Spiritual Construction and Application, affords an evident proof of the imagination or judgment being clouded by a corrupt and evil disposed heart. The Passage Adverted to by our SAVIOUR, was from the Prophet Hosea, where JEHOVAH'S Remonstrance at the then heartless application of the professed Servants of GOD, to His Appointed Worship, is thus recorded: "*I Desired Mercy, and not Sacrifice; and the Knowledge of GOD more than Burnt Offerings.*"—Chap. vi, 6.

The observance of the Sabbath is most effectually kept by works of humanity and charity, as well as of holiness, after the Example of The Blessed JESUS, Who frequently, in the Proofs He Gave of His DIVINE Power, Ministered on this, as on other days, to the temporal and physical as well as Spiritual Good of the Poor and Suffering Suppliant; thus Manifesting Himself in the most attractive sense, "*LORD of the Sabbath.*"

And when He was Departed thence, He Went into their Synagogue: and, behold, there was a Man, which had his hand withered. And they asked Him, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath Days!" that they might accuse Him.—9, 10.

Though every Place, where JESUS was, became Hallowed by His Presence; and on every Occasion, and in every Situation, He Proclaimed the Tidings of Salvation, and Manifested to the humble and contrite and believing Hearts His DIVINITY; yet did He not Neglect the prescribed and customary Attendance on the Places of Public Worship; for though Equal to GOD, as Touching His GODHEAD, yet, as Man did He Bow with Reverence to The DIVINE Will, and to the Observance of The DIVINE Commandments: Proving Himself, in all things, A PATTERN of Holiness, as of Love and of Mercy.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And He Entered again into the Synagogue: and there was a Man there, which had a withered hand. And they watched Him, whether He would Heal him on the Sabbath Day; that they might accuse Him.*—Chap. iii, 1, 2.

St. Luke's is thus: *And it came to pass also on another Sabbath, that He (JESUS) Entered into the Synagogue and Taught: and there was a Man, whose right hand was withered. And the Scribes and Pharisees watched Him, whether He would Heal on the Sabbath Day; that they might find an accusation against Him.*—Chap. vi, 6, 7.

According to St. Matthew's account, it might seem that the malicious Jews first drew our SAVIOUR'S Attention to the suffering Object: but according to that given both by St. Mark and St. Luke, it seems probable that our SAVIOUR'S Compassion Led Him first to Accost the Sufferer: though from His DIVINE Attribute of Omniscience, He full well knew the evil that was working in the hearts of Many around Him, who from the first had the malignant hope that CHRIST would Exercise His Healing Faculty on that Day, and, thereby, Lay Himself open, as they assumed, to the charge of Breaking the fourth Commandment. Rare as may be this bodily malady, of death, as it were, ingrafted upon life, how too generally is it the figure of that Spiritual apathy and inertness which benumb and torpify the Soul, and incapacitate it for the exalted uses, to which it was Appointed by its CREATOR, unless DIVINE Grace Rouses and Animates it: a disease this of the most awful and endless tendency, which The SON of Man, The Great PHYSICIAN of Souls, can Alone Cure; and Who Freely Offers His Healing Balm to All who so suffer, and who will in faith come unto Him, that they may be Recovered. And let us not suppose that these envious and persecuting Jews stand singly as monuments of the weakness and wickedness of Human Nature, which would frustrate the Gracious Intentions of DIVINE PROVIDENCE for the Good of His Creatures, by not only themselves neglecting the Salvation open to them, but striving to keep Others from taking shelter from misery and everlasting ruin within its Pale. Let us consult our own hearts, and consider how little we have ourselves lived to The LORD, or rejoiced in The ROCK of Salvation; and how much, by our example of negligence and inobservance of religious reverence and duties, we may have influenced Others, unhappily both for them and ourselves, to do likewise. May we, therefore, pray with fervency to GOD to put away this our iniquity, and to Spare us in His Abundant Mercy, through the Merits and for the Sake of Him, Who Gave Himself A Ransom for Sinners.

On a similar occasion, recorded by St. John, when our SAVIOUR had on the Sabbath day Given sight to a blind Man, Some of the Pharisees, who were present, said, "*This Man is not of GOD, because he keepeth not the Sabbath Day.*" But Others said, "*How can a Man, that is a Sinner, do such Miracles?*"

*And there was a division among them. Still so obstinate is unbelief, that the Opposers of the Exercise of His Power, because Practised by CHRIST on the Sabbath, doubted the blind Man's assertion of his having been born blind; and though the Parents, on being appealed to, confirmed the fact, yet still, though thus confuted in their object, the incredulous Jews continued to reject CHRIST as The MESSIAH; and, on the contrary, branded Him with the appellation, "This Man is a Sinner;" and, in the inability to deny the Miracle, demanded that the praise should be given to GOD: thus professing by their lips a holy worship, when their hearts were sadly estranged therefrom. And when the healed Man reasoned with them thus: "Whether He be a Sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." Then said they to him again, "What did He to thee? how opened He thine eyes?" He answered them, "I have told you already, and ye did not hear; wherefore would ye hear it again? Will ye also be His Disciples?" Then they reviled him, and said, "Thou art His Disciple! but we are Moses' Disciples. We know that GOD Spake unto Moses: as for this Fellow, we know not from whence he is." The Man answered and said unto them, "Why herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from Whence He is; and yet He hath Opened mine eyes: now we know that GOD Heareth not Sinners: but if any Man be a Worshipper of GOD, and doeth His Will, him He Heareth. Since the World began was it not heard that any Man opened the eyes of One, that was born blind: if This Man were not of GOD, He could do nothing." They answered, and said unto him, "Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us?" And they cast him out. JESUS Heard that they had cast him out: and when He had Found him, He Said unto him, "Dost thou believe on The SON of GOD?" He answered, and said, "Who is He, Lord, that I might believe on Him?" And JESUS Said unto him, "Thou hast both seen Him, and it is He, That Talketh with thee." And he said, "LORD, I believe:" and he worshipped Him. And JESUS Said, "For Judgment I am Come into this World, that They, which see not, might see; and that They, which see, might be made blind." And Some of the Pharisees, which were with Him, heard These Words, and said unto Him, "Are we blind also?" JESUS Said unto them, "If ye were blind, ye should have no sin; but now ye say, 'We see:' therefore your sin remaineth."—John ix, 25 to 41.*

△ And He Said unto them, "What Man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the Sabbath Day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out? How much then is a Man better than a sheep! Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath Days." Then Saith He to the Man, "Stretch forth thine hand!" And he stretched it forth; and it was restored whole like as the other.—11 to 13.


The Answers Given on all occasions by our SAVIOUR, even to His most inveterate Enemies, were Such as Bespoke the most Consummate Wisdom, and the most Exhaustless Benevolence. They were so Adapted to all capacities, so powerful as Appeals to Human reason, that the Force of Them was Irresistible in argument, and well Calculated to Convert All, but hearts of stone, callous through the petrifying influence of pride and sensuality to all soberness of reflection or uprightness of thought. For the protection of his own property no One hesitated to exert himself, even on the Sabbath; and why should not exertion be allowed for the preservation of That, in comparison with which all the property of this World is but as dust in the balance: namely, the Salvation of an Immortal Spirit from the pit of Everlasting Desolation. The Declaration of our SAVIOUR, that "*it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath Day,*" must be understood as made in opposition to the Pharisaical Jews, who, in the blindness of their

understanding, through the corruption of their hearts, were putting their own construction upon the Mosaic Law, contrary to the real and Spiritual meaning. For us, however, whose Law is constituted equally in the Example as in the Precepts of CHRIST, it is not only justifiable, but is indeed, imperative on us not only to embrace all opportunities of doing good that present themselves, whether on the Sabbath Day or on other days, but honestly and zealously to seek for them; and the visitation of the Sick, either in body or Soul, is an office within every One's compass, and is open to constant exercise.

At the incredulity of the Jews, on whom The Present GOD, though Veiled in Human Flesh, Manifested the Greatness of His Power in the instantaneous Cure of every variety of infirmity, the profundity of His Wisdom in Opposing and Silencing every argument urged against Him, and the comprehensiveness of His Benevolence, in Going about to Do Good, One is apt to marvel; but do not enough consider that The Same Almighty POWER is still Unceasingly Exerted towards Healing every infirmity of the Soul, and Inspiring it with Spiritual Health and Strength, if, in humility of heart and integrity of faith, the Balm of Heavenly Unction is sought by supplication and holy confidence.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And He (JESUS) Saith unto the Man, which had the withered hand, "Stand forth!" And He Saith unto them, "Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath Days, or to do evil; to Save life, or to kill?" But they held their peace. And when He had Looked round about on them with anger, being Grieved for the hardness of their hearts, He Saith unto the Man, "Stretch forth thine hand!" And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other.—Chap. iii, 3 to 5.*

St. Luke's account is as follows: *And it came to pass also on another Sabbath, that He (JESUS) Entered into the Synagogue, and Taught: and there was a Man, whose right hand was withered. And the Scribes and Pharisees watched Him, whether He would Heal on the Sabbath Day; that they might find an accusation against Him. But He Knew their thoughts, and Said to the Man, which had the withered hand, "Rise up, and stand forth in the midst!" And he arose and stood forth. Then Said JESUS unto them, "I will Ask you one thing, Is it lawful on the Sabbath Days to do good, or to do evil? to Save life, or to destroy it?" And, Looking round about upon them all, He Said unto the Man, "Stretch forth thy hand!" And he did so: and his hand was Restored whole as the other.—Chap. vi, 6 to 10.*

Then the Pharisees went out, and held a council against Him, how they might destroy Him.—14. 

These Slaves of prejudice and pride, unable openly to contend before the People against the Wisdom of The MESSIAH, with envious and obdurate hearts, dead to every impulse of magnanimity, and lost to all admiration of virtue and good works, retire in silence to concert, in privacy, some desperate scheme of malignant hate, that they might wreak their vengeance for their disappointment and chagrin, instead of manfully owning themselves fairly subdued by reason and argument, and seeking That Light, Which was Ready to Enlighten their understandings, and to Guide their feet into the way of Peace and Wisdom and Truth and Holiness. And how often are the Interpositions and Warnings of PROVIDENCE frustrated in us; and the Occasion of Them converted into more eagerly sought opportunities of confirming and deepening the Soul in iniquity: thus sacrificing to wounded Pride and Selfish imaginations even the means of Grace, and the Hope of Glory.

St. Mark's account is thus: *And the Pharisees went forth, and straightway*

*took counsel with the Herodians against Him, how they might destroy Him.*—Chap. iii, 6. Not content with their own unaided conspiracy, they sought to enlist the mercenary Tools of a corrupt Government in the unhallowed and murderous work.

St. Luke writes, *And they were filled with madness; and communed One with Another, what they might do to JESUS.*—Chap. vi, 11.

But when JESUS Knew it, He Withdrew Himself from thence; and great Multitudes followed Him; and He Healed them all.—15.

JESUS Knowing that His Time for Suffering Death was not yet come, and Understanding, with the Spirit of Omniscience, what desperate plot, by the imagined secretly confederating Foes of His KINGDOM, was hatching, prudently Withdrew; having, however, first Furnished a Proof of the Influence both of His Words and Works on the minds of the Well-disposed and Unprejudiced; who, to the extent even of great Multitudes, followed Him, and who were as a Cloud of Witnesses to the Good He Did, as He Went about, by Healing all the Sick that were brought to Him; as well as of the Good Tidings of Salvation Which He Preached unto them.

St. Mark's account is thus: *But JESUS Withdrew Himself with His Disciples to the Sea; and a great Multitude from Galilee followed Him, and from Judea, and from Jerusalem, and from Idumea, and from beyond Jordan; and they about Tyre and Sidon, a great Multitude, when they had heard What Great Things He Did, came unto Him. And He Spake to His Disciples that a small ship should wait on Him, because of the Multitude, lest they should throng Him: for He had Healed Many; insomuch that they pressed upon Him for to touch Him, as Many as had plagues: and unclean Spirits, when they saw Him, fell down before Him and cried, saying, "Thou art The SON of GOD!"*—Chap. iii, 7 to 11.

△ And Charged them, "That they should not make Him known!" that it might be Fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the Prophet, (xlii, 1 to 3.) saying, "Behold, My SERVANT, Whom I have Chosen; My BELOVED, in Whom My SOUL is Well Pleased! I will Put My SPIRIT upon Him; and He shall Shew Judgment to the Gentiles: He shall not Strive, nor Cry; neither shall any Man hear His Voice in the streets: a bruised reed shall He not Break; and smoking flax shall He not Quench, till He Send forth Judgment unto Victory. And in His Name shall the Gentiles trust."—16 to 21.

To the observations offered on a similar passage at Chapter viii, verse 4, it may be additionally considered that in the discrimination between the seasons when to avow our faith in CHRIST, and when to cherish it in silence; or when to let our light so shine before Men, that they may see our deeds if good; and glorify our FATHER, Which is in Heaven; and when not to let our left hand know what our right hand doeth, is to be learnt in the School of Gospel Discipline, and in the exercise of prayer for SPIRITUAL Guidance, and the heart-applied study of The DIVINE Word; all of which will concur to influence us to weigh deeply and justly the motive, which is the spring of the particular action contemplated, and will give to it the just character of good or evil, according as that incitement be pure and holy, or otherwise, in the fear of GOD, and not in the fear or for the praise of Man.

This Passage from Isaiah is a most beautifully figurative Prophecy of the Humility, Mildness and Benevolence, and of the Patience and Forbearance of The Blessed JESUS whilst on Earth, and of the Prevalence of the Influence of those qualities amongst the Faithful unto the World's termination, when He shall Come to Judge that World, and shall Triumph in Omnipotence and Glory; and They, that are His, will be Eternally Sealed unto Redemption: whilst They,

that have rejected His Offered Salvation, will be for Ever Excluded from His Gracious Presence and Communications. By the Progress and Spread of His Gospel amongst the Heathen of almost all Tongues, this Prophecy is daily in the progress towards fulfilling; for He is thereby Becoming the Confidence of many Gentile Nations; and, doubtless, will Become Such unto the Ends of all the Earth, when the Fulness of the Gentiles shall come in. May we, in our Generation, learn the same Goodly Lesson, and, after This PATTERN of all Excellence, be meek and lowly of heart; and we shall then find the only true Rest to the Soul.

St. Mark states that *He straitly Charged them, "That they should not make Him Known."*—Chap. iii, 12.


Then was brought unto Him One, possessed with a Devil, blind, and dumb; and He Healed him, insomuch that the Blind and Dumb both spake and saw. And all the People were amazed, and said, "Is not This, the SON of David?"—22, 23.

The succession of Miracle upon Miracle, All Tending to Portray a Character of Perfect Benevolence, it might have been expected would have flashed irresistible conviction upon every Mind: but such is the nature of prejudice on the Human heart, and such the wilfulness of its blindness in Spiritual discernment, that the Exercise of Such Power and Goodness in Union, as had never before been heard of, was rejected by proud and haughty Man as Evidences of A Present GOD. And such is the continuing influence of spiritual pride unto this day: it occasions that blindness of the Soul to its most vital interest, and that dumbness to all truly holy conversation and Godliness, which The ALMIGHTY, though Able, is not Willing to Heal, but upon a repentance and conversion of the heart, and a faith in JESUS CHRIST as The Only Means of Salvation. But Blessed be GOD, and Blessed His SON, our SAVIOUR, that Such Means of Recovery from every sickness of the Soul, and from the lowest depths of Spiritual darkness are still Open to Every One, that, in meekness and faithfulness and thankfulness, will seek unto The SOURCE of Spiritual Light and Life through The Adorable MEDIATOR. [See the observations on Chap. ix, 32.]

The inquiry by the People, "*Is not This The SON of David?*" intimated their expectation, and which was, admissively, a general one among the Jews at that time, of A MESSIAH; and that He should be of the Lineage of David; Who was to Redeem His People, and in Whom all the Nations of the Earth were to be Blessed.

St. Mark's narrative is more general: *And unclean Spirits, when they saw Him, fell down before Him, and cried, saying, "Thou art The SON of GOD!" And He Straitly Charged them, "that they should not make Him Known."*—Chap. iii, 11, 12.

St. Luke's is thus: *And He (JESUS) was Casting out a Devil, and it was dumb. And it came to pass, when the Devil was gone out, the Dumb spake: and the People wondered.*—Chap. xi, 14.

But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, "This Fellow doth not cast out Devils, but by Beelzebub, the Prince of the Devils."—24. 

What deep depravity of heart and what shallowness of mind are here demonstrated, as the effect of Spiritual pride and prejudice in these hypocritical Pharisees, assuming to be righteous and holy: instead of asking with a prayerful spirit Wisdom from Above, they, in the daringness and arrogance of their hearts, give vent to its malice through the tongue, accusing The AUTHOR of all Good, as a Chief Instrument of ill in the hands of the Author of all evil. [See the remarks at Chapter ix, 34.]



St. Mark relates it as occurring after our SAVIOUR'S Call of the Disciples, and prefaces the occurrence further by saying, *And they went into an house; and the Multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread. And when His Friends heard of it, they went out to lay hold on Him; for they said, "He is beside Himself!" And the Scribes, which come down from Jerusalem, said, "He hath Beelzebub, and by the Prince of the Devils casteth He out Devils."*—Chap. iii, 19 to 22.

St. Luke's continuation is thus: *But Some of them (the People) said, "He casteth out Devils through Beelzebub, the Chief of the Devils."*—Chap. xi, 15.

And JESUS Knew their thoughts, and Said unto them, "Every Kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every City or House divided against itself shall not stand. And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his Kingdom stand? And if I, by Beelzebub, Cast out Devils, by whom do your Children cast them out? therefore they shall be your judges."—25 to 27.

The Exposure of the absurdity of the Pharisees' conclusion, by similes at once familiar and irresistibly impressive, was Preceded by a Manifestation of The DIVINE Power of JESUS in Diving into the secrets of the heart; thus Giving the most incontestible Proof of His Own Omniscience as well as Omnipotence. The Penetration of the heart of Man, amidst all its windings and doublings, belongs alone to GOD, for It is HE, *Which Searcheth the reins and hearts.*—Rev. ii, 23.


The meaning of our SAVIOUR'S argumentative Inquiry, "By whom did the Children of the faithless Pharisees cast out Devils." may seem to be this: If the assertion of the Pharisees, that JESUS Cast out Devils through the power of Beelzebub, were just, why should not Such of the Pharisees themselves, or their Children, who were the willing Servants of sin and of Satan, being addicted to all manner of iniquity, be employed by the Idol of their devotedness for the same object; since they would not deny that they acted under an evil influence. But this did not JESUS; on the contrary, He openly Proclaimed that He Came to Overturn the kingdom of Satan in the Human heart. And so it indeed was proved to the observation and admission of every One who witnessed the state of those, whom JESUS Dispossessed of Devils. Or it may be taken in a still more literal sense, and signify that, as the Apostles of JESUS were Jews, and Some the Children of Pharisees, and whom He had expressly Empowered, as His Disciples, in His Name to cast out Devils, which they accordingly did under the observation of numberless Witnesses, He Refers the sceptical Pharisees to those Persons, the very Children of Some of them, and originally of the same faith, to judge between them and Himself; well Knowing that they would exultingly confess, a confession in which the Undemoniacised would heartily join, that the Wondrous Power, by which such Dispossession was Wrought, Proceeded from GOD, and Came from JESUS, as The SON of GOD.

To the Omniscience of our SAVIOUR, St. John thus bore testimony, saying, that *JESUS Knew all Men; and Needed not that Any should testify of Man; for He Knew what was in Man.*—Chap. ii, 24, 25.

St. Mark's continuation is thus: *And He (JESUS) Called Them unto Him, and Said unto Them in Parables, "How can Satan cast out Satan? and if a Kingdom be divided against itself, that Kingdom cannot stand: and if a House be divided against itself, that House cannot stand: and if Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end."*—Chap. iii, 23 to 26.

St. Luke's narrative is thus: *Others, tempting Him, sought of Him a Sign from Heaven. But He, Knowing their thoughts, Said unto them, "Every Kingdom divided against itself, is brought to desolation; and a House divided against a House"*

*falleth: if Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? because ye say, that I Cast out Devils through Beelzebub. And if I, by Beelzebub, Cast out Devils, by whom do your Sons cast them out? therefore shall they be your Judges.*"—Chap. xi, 16 to 19.

"But if I Cast out Devils by The SPIRIT of GOD, then the KINGDOM of GOD is Come unto you."—28. 

The Conclusion was Just, as the Argument was irresistible. The Power of GOD being Miraculously Manifested, was an Evidence of the Peculiar Presence of GOD; and the Object, for which That Power was Exerted, being the Suppression of evil and the Promotion of Good, the obvious Effect of DIVINE Mercy, was a further Testimony of JESUS being The MESSIAH, Whose KINGDOM the Prophets had foretold should at that time Come. And so eventually will It Come in Its Fulness, and in Its Spiritual Influence Become Universal, Pervading the hearts of the Faithful, Inducing obedience unto holiness, Superinducing Peace and Heavenward Hope, and Overthrowing the powers of Darkness and the reign of Error and Impiety on Earth. And, as proclaimed in the Spirit of Prophecy by the holy Daniel, *In those Days shall The GOD of Heaven Set up a KINGDOM, Which shall never be destroyed:* [Chap. ii, 44.] and thus is The KING of This Coming KINGDOM Described by the same Prophet: *Behold, ONE like The SON of Man Came with the clouds of Heaven, and Came to The ANCIENT of Days; and they brought Him near before Him; and there was Given Him Dominion and Glory and a KINGDOM, That all People, Nations and Languages should serve Him: His Dominion is an Everlasting Dominion, Which shall not pass away; and His KINGDOM That, Which shall not be destroyed.*—Chap. vii, 13, 14. The Truth of which Prophecy was Confirmed, and Its Application Made to JESUS by the Angel Gabriel on his Annunciation to the Virgin Mary of The SAVIOUR'S Birth; as we have before seen in a former reference to Luke i, 31 to 33. The KINGDOM of CHRIST upon Earth was a Dominion over every evil passion of our Nature, and the Overcoming the Power of Satan, when directed with all his subtlety to separate the Nature of Man from any communion with the Holiness and, consequently, the Happiness of Heaven. And as It finds Its Way only to the hearts of the Meek and Contrite Spirits, and as the Haughty and the Spiritually-Proud have no lot or part Therein, so was It justly characterised by our SAVIOUR, when He Said of It, "*The KINGDOM of GOD Cometh not with observation; neither shall they say, 'Lo, here!' or, 'Lo, there!' for, behold, The KINGDOM of GOD is within you:*" as Recorded by St. Luke, xvii, 20, 21. The parallel passage with the Text, by this Apostle, is thus: "*But if I, with the Finger of GOD, Cast out Devils, no doubt The KINGDOM of GOD is Come upon you.*"—Chap. xi, 20.

St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans, writes, *The KINGDOM of GOD is not meat and drink; but Righteousness and Peace, and Joy in The HOLY GHOST;* and which Assurance he prefaces with his exhortation to an abstinence from whatever might throw on the minds of Others a doubt of the Professors of the Christian faith, having a just view of and paramount desire for an Inheritance in the KINGDOM of their MASTER, "*Let not your good be evil spoken of!*"—Rom. xiv, 17, 16.

"Or else how can One enter into a strong Man's house and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong Man? and then he will spoil his house."—29.

The propriety and force of this simile are obvious. So powerful is the Devil, when once he hath possession of the heart of Man, no other power than

That of GOD can dispossess him of it. For, as Saith The LORD, by His Prophet Isaiah, "*Shall the prey be taken from the Mighty; or the lawful Captive delivered? But even the Captives of the Mighty shall be Taken away; and the prey of the Terrible shall be Delivered: for I will Contend with him, that contendeth with thee; and I will Save thy Children: and all Flesh shall know that I, The LORD, am thy SAVIOUR and thy REDEEMER, The Mighty ONE of Jacob.*" —Isa. xlix, 24 to 26. And Blessed be GOD for His Mercies and His HOLY SON for His Mediation, however fast may be the hold, which the Devil hath of us, The ALMIGHTY can and will Bind him, and Make him give up his prey, if with penitent confession of the need, and a lively faith in the possession of a SAVIOUR, He be devoutly supplicated to Do so.

But another Day is foretold in Prophecy, when a more full and final Triumph over Satan shall be witnessed, of which we read in the Revelations of St. John, where he thus describes it as Imparted to him in his Heavenly Vision: *And I heard a loud Voice Saying in Heaven, "Now is Come Salvation, and Strength, and The KINGDOM of GOD, and the Power of His CHRIST: for the Accuser of our Brethren is Cast down, which accused them before our GOD day and night; and they overcame him by the Blood of The LAMB, and by the Word of their Testimony."*—Rev. xii, 10, 11.

St. Luke's narrative is thus: "*When a strong Man armed, keepeth his Palace, his goods are in peace: but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour, wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.*"—Chap. xi, 21, 22.

△ "He, that is not with Me, is against Me; and he, that gathereth not with Me, scattereth abroad."—30.

Between a devotedness of the Soul to GOD, and a dedication of the heart and mind to the unspiritualized World, there is no middle or neutral state for Those upon whom the Gospel Light has Burst forth, and to whom The KINGDOM of HEAVEN is Revealed and Freely Offered. In Human judgment it may be difficult, even if it be possible, to fix the line or limit, which divides the Two; but with GOD, Who Judgeth Righteous Judgment, and Who Searcheth the heart, this is, as all things are, possible: and though the heart, amidst its deceivableness of Others, may here even deceive itself with a vain hope that GOD does not Mark iniquity, and that the World and He may well be reconciled; yet in The Day of Universal Judgment, the Condemned of The Righteous LORD, will be then Self-condemned also. Let no One, who is not a Labourer in CHRIST'S Vineyard, think to reap the wages of That Watchful and Discriminating LORD of the Vineyard, Who Requireth some portion of labour in answer to His Calling, even though it be only entered upon at the eleventh hour of the day. May we, each and every One of us, be instant in prayer for the Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT to Direct and Rule our hearts, that we may be Fellow-Workers with CHRIST; according to our several means and opportunities, so working out our Salvation with fear and trembling, yet resting on that Faith in CHRIST, which is alone able to Save us unto the Day of Redemption. For to be *against* CHRIST, which is in the Text laid down as the necessary consequence of not being *with* Him, is to be the Destroyers of our own Souls; and in so being at enmity with GOD, by rejecting His Proffered Salvation through CHRIST JESUS, to exclude ourselves deliberately and by a preference for the sinful lusts of this Life over the pure joys of the endless Life to Come, to exclude ourselves from HEAVEN, and unfit ourselves for the Holiness of Its Habitations. It is scattering and setting at nought the Precious Fruits of the

neyard of The LORD of Hosts, Cultured and Offered to us by His Only SON, and Which would Nourish us unto Everlasting Life; and instead thereof feeding, perverted tastes and Self-willed preference, on husks, and drinking the noxious juices of those noxious herbs, which set the Soul on fire and rankle in the heart with consuming fury, begetting unquenchable anguish, and never-ending torment.

St. Luke's narrative is thus: "*He, that is not with Me, is against Me: and he that gathereth not with Me, scattereth.*"—Chap. xi, 23.

Wherefore I Say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be Forgiven unto Men: but the blasphemy against The HOLY GHOST shall not be Forgiven unto Men. And Whosoever speaketh a word against The SON of Man, it shall be Forgiven him: but Whosoever speaketh against The HOLY GHOST, it shall not be Forgiven him, neither in this World, neither in the World to Come."—31, 32. △

The comprehensiveness of the Efficacy of CHRIST'S Mediation, where It is accepted upon the indispensable but easy Conditions, of repentance for past unkindness of The DIVINE Goodness, of a conviction of the hopelessness of Pardon and Restoration to DIVINE Favour but in GOD'S Own Appointed Way, and of faith in JESUS as That Appointed and Self-Offering MEDIATOR, inducing, as it cannot but in necessary consistency do, the fruit thereof, obedience unto holiness, is unspeakably Comforting and Supporting to the contrite Heart and to the broken Spirit. And the one excepted offence, which DIVINE Commiseration must Exclude from its Pale, is the attributing the generous and Benevolent Operations of The HOLY GHOST to the influence of the Devil; which is so to be expounded according to St. Mark's record of the parallel passage: "*Verily I (JESUS) Say unto you, All sins shall be Forgiven unto the Sons of Men, and blasphemies, wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: but he, that shall blaspheme against The HOLY GHOST, hath never Forgiveness; but is in danger of Eternal Damnation! because they said, 'He hath an unclean Spirit.'*"—chap. iii, 28 to 30. Dreadful, indeed, would be the state of that Soul, which has consciously committed the sin, if ever it were disposed for repentance, and and its strivings for Pardon unavailing, notwithstanding the Atonement Made by CHRIST for the sins of the whole World: but such a Situation, perhaps, never has been, nor ever will be experienced whilst this Life lasts; for the effect of blasphemy against The HOLY GHOST is utterly to quench the power of The SPIRIT within us; and, when That is Gone, the Soul is without all disposition and incitement to good, and rejects, with frightful contemptuousness, the thought even, and much more the act of repenting: for as the Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews wrote: *It is impossible for Those, who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the Heavenly Gift, and were Made Partakers of the HOLY GHOST, and have tasted the Good Word of GOD and the Powers of the World to Come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves The SON of GOD afresh, and put Him to an open shame:* [Heb. vi, 4 to 6.] and again, *If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the Truth, there remaineth no more Sacrifice for sins; but certain fearful looking-for of Judgment and Fiery Indignation, Which shall devour the Adversaries. He, that despised Moses' Law, died without mercy under no or three Witnesses: Of how much sorer Punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot The SON of GOD, and hath counted the Blood of the Covenant, Wherewith he was Sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto The SPIRIT of Grace? It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of The Living GOD!*—Heb. x, 26. 29. 31. 38.

St. John seems also to advert to the same unpardonable transgression,

when he says, "*If any Man sees his Brother sin a sin, which is not unto death, he shall ask, and He (The SON of GOD) shall Give him Life for them, that sin not unto Death: There is a sin unto Death; I do not say that he shall pray for it.*"—1 John i, 16.

St. Luke's narrative is thus: "*Whosoever shall speak a word against The SON of Man, it shall be Forgiven him: but unto him, that blasphemeth against The HOLY GHOST, it shall not be Forgiven.*"—Chap. xii, 10.

Let us take care that we resist not the Movements of The HOLY GHOST in our Souls: but yield to Its Gracious and Kindly Admonitions with humility and thankfulness; lest we quench by neglect That Light, Which Alone Shineth unto Eternal Day, Leading the Soul to its Mansion of Heavenly Bliss!

"Either make the tree good, and his fruit good! or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt! for the tree is known by his fruit."—33.

Consistency of character is here recommended: if we have faith, true, vital, saving, lively faith, let us shew forth its fruits, without doubt or fearfulness: but, if we have it not, let us not hypocritically assume to possess it; for GOD. Who Knoweth all things, is not mocked; and assuredly our sin will find us out: and instead of the Fruit of the Tree of Life, we shall gather to ourselves thorns briers and noxious weeds, the bitter weeds of remorse and despair.

St. Luke's narrative is thus: "*A good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit: for every tree is known by his own fruit: for of thorns Men do not gather figs; nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes.*"—Chap. vi, 43, 44. [See further observations applicable to this at Chapter vii, 17.]

△ "O Generation of Vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."—34.

JESUS, Who as GOD, and The CREATOR of Man, Knew what was in Man, Dissected the hearts of His Enemies, and Exposed all their iniquities and attempts at deception: and Finding in them the craftiness and the venom of serpents, Assimilated them by name to a class of that tribe of destructive reptiles; and Announced to themselves their inveterate propensity to do and to meditate and to utter evil, from the false and corrupt bias of their hearts; whose impulses naturally guide the action and prompt the utterance of the tongue. [See observations on Chapter iii, v. 7.]

"A Good Man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil Man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things."—35.

The term good, is here used comparatively, for no One is truly good except GOD: but amongst Men, Some are more disposed to do good and to avoid evil than Others; and as the will predominates in the one way or the other, so will, generally speaking, the conduct and conversation be good or evil. And though the Best of us have too large a measure of evil passion and inclination rising in continual resistance to the desire to be good and to do good, yet we have the Assurance that The HOLY SPIRIT is ever Ready to Aid us in the conflict and to Bring us off more than Conquerors, for the Sake of Him, Who Came to Rescue us from the power of evil and to Pay our Ransom from the captivity of sin. It is thus and thus only that the evil, that is in us, can be Cast out from us, and the disposition both to be good and to do good by word and by works, be Implanted in us. Through the Merits and Mediation of CHRIST we may obtain both Pardon and DIVINE Reconciliation, since the faith, that is so

unded, worketh by love, and rejoiceth in every occasion of diffusing good, and reading the Good Tidings of Salvation.

St. Luke's narrative is thus: "*A good Man out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil Man out of the evil treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.*"—Chap. vi, 45.

But I Say unto you, That every idle word, that Men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the Day of Judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified; and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."—36, 37.

That Man, as an accountable Being, should be so for every utterance and act of his life, is only reasonable and consistent with the most obvious justice: not only, therefore, all deliberate and premeditated sin, in word or deed, and even in thought, but every idle word spoken irreverently and with a tendency to produce evil, shall be fully accounted for: and terrible will be the responsibility of the Inconsiderate, who have spoken or written, though in levity only, the words of profaneness, impiety, or obscenity; and whose example, though unsuspectingly to themselves, may have operated even in remote Generations, to produce the same or a similar disrespect of GOD or of His Holy Ordinances. It is to be feared that in a thoughtless and adulterous Generation, (such as the World has but too often experienced,) there are many Persons, who are altogether indifferent about their own everlasting interests, and who would be little considerate of those of Others; and, indeed, haplessly there have been, and still are, Some, who strive to involve Others in the same awful contempt of morality. But Some there may be, and it is hoped are, upon whom, if not a regard for their own state of Immortality, yet some tenderness for the possible condition of Others, whether nearly allied to them or not, may operate as a restraint upon the tongue, so that it do not speak out the surmisings and false assonings of an infidel head, and a proud heart. May we pray, without ceasing, that GOD would Graciously Vouchsafe to Keep the door of our lips, or Remove from us the sin of evil-speaking, and to Stay the increase of evil, which any guarded and idle expression, that at any time has escaped from us, may be producing. The Day of Judgment will disclose all offences of the tongue, even but whispered into a solitary ear, and condemnation of them will equally arise from ourselves as from our Almighty and All-righteous JUDGE; and the perpetrators of evil, however wrapt in secrecy, or unheeded in this Life, will ere confess the justice of that Punishment, which will be Inflicted on them; enough bemoaning in unspeakable anguish of Soul their having neglected the actual Means of Pardon and Reconciliation, once so Freely Offered in the mediation of JESUS, The SON of The MOST HIGH.

As the power of speech is one of the great and distinguishing properties of man, by which he is so pre-eminently Favoured by The CREATOR of All, and used exaltedly above all the other Works of GOD'S Almighty Hand; so does it behove us to employ that faculty in the praise and service of so Benevolent and Loving A FATHER, as affectionate and dutiful Children. *For God shall bring every work into Judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.*—Eccles. xii, 14,

Then Certain of the Scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, "Master, we would see a Sign from Thee!"—38.

The incredulity of these Scribes and Pharisees, in defiance of the Miracles wrought, of the Wisdom Displayed, and of the Benevolence Exercised by JESUS, is astonishing. Silenced but not convinced, because they leaned to their

own understanding, which was yielded to pride, they would not yield to the Arguments of Him, Who Spake as never Man spake. Therefore, at the hazard of being confounded by the Exhibition, they asked for a Sign from Heaven; Which, if Granted, would have taken from Faith its perfect work, and would not have harmonized with the Mild and Lowly Character of JESUS. And when considering the perversity of the unconverted heart, and the evil of the disposition, which pervades it, how little probability is there, if The SAVIOUR had Marked His Office of MEDIATOR with a Signal Display of His DIVINE Power, at the instant of His being urged to Do so, from a motive so at variance with the humility which becomes Creatures, when in communion with their CREATOR, that they would have repented them of their unbelief, and sought, by meekness and righteousness and true holiness, to be received as Disciples of The MESSIAH. They had seen Exemplified in JESUS Much of What Moses and the Prophets had taught respecting The REDEEMER of the World; and if they believed not them, neither would they have believed though a further Sign had been Given them from Heaven.

But He Answered, and Said unto them, "An evil and adulterous Generation seeketh after a Sign: and there shall no Sign be Given to it, but the Sign of the Prophet Jonas: for as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall The SON of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the Earth. The Men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this Generation, and shall condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonas: and, behold, A GREATER than Jonas is here! The Queen of the South shall rise up in the Judgment with this Generation, and shall condemn it; for she came from the uttermost parts of the Earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon: and, behold, A GREATER than Solomon is here!"—39 to 42.

As a Sign was unnecessary where there was the invincible obstacle to Faith, which Prejudice and Pride presented, so none was given, but an allusion made to the Sign of DIVINE Power in Rescuing the Prophet Jonas from the belly of the great Fish that inclosed him, as typical of that Rescue of The SAVIOUR of Mankind from the bowels of the Earth, which thus was figuratively Prophesied by That SAVIOUR Himself; and Which was to be the Earnest of that Resurrection from the grave of All the Faithful in CHRIST JESUS unto DIVINE Favour, and a Restoration to the forfeited Inheritance in the KINGDOM of The MESSIAH.

The exposition of This typical Prophecy is here so express and clear, and was so shortly afterwards Fulfilled, that these sceptical Scribes and Pharisees, who could not, if they lived on, have been ignorant of such Fulfilment, must have been without excuse, if they did not then believe in It, to the Saving of their Souls.

The historical account of Jonah's preaching was thus: *The Word of The LORD Came unto Jonah, Saying, "Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great City, and preach unto it the Preaching That I Bid thee!" So Jonah arose and went unto Nineveh, according to the Word of The LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceeding great City of three days' journey; and Jonah began to enter into the City a day's journey; and he cried and said, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!" So the People of Nineveh believed GOD, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the Greatest of them, even to the Least of them. For word came unto the King of Nineveh; and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes: and he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the King and his Nobles, saying, "Let neither Man nor beast, herd nor flock taste any thing! let them not feed, nor drink water! but let Man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto GOD! yea, let them turn every One from his evil way, and from the violence*

*that is in their hands! Who can tell if GOD will Turn and Repent, and Turn away from His fierce Anger, that we perish not?" And GOD Saw their works, that they turned from their evil way: and GOD Repented of the evil, that He had Said that He would Do unto them; and He Did it not.—Jonah iii.* Thus, where the heart was predisposed to receive the Word of Truth, the threatened Vengeance of GOD, though communicated only by an Alien to the Land and its People, was Effectual in turning even the then mightiest Monarch upon Earth, and his Subjects, from the paths of impiety to faithfulness and obedience. But though The SON of GOD Himself Came in the Beauty of Holiness, and not only Preached in the Perfection of Wisdom as of Truth, but Confirmed the DIVINITY of His Character by Acts Belonging only to Almighty Power, yet from the obduracy of these hypocritical and ceremonizing Jews, He Preached and Wrought These Words and Works of Wonder before them in vain! To us, be it remembered, the Same DIVINE Word is Communicated, The Same Gracious Admonition is Offered, and the Same Miraculous Power in the Communication of The HOLY SPIRIT is Dispensed: and the same need of repentance and turning of the heart to the Will and Ways of GOD belong. May we, therefore, both watch and pray that we become not insensible to the Warnings of The Gospel Dispensation, and to the Preachings of our DIVINE PROPHET, PRIEST, and KING!

The Scriptural account of Queen Sheba's visit to King Solomon is thus: *When the Queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the Name of The LORD, she came to prove him with hard questions. And she came to Jerusalem with a very great Train, with camels that bare spices, and very much gold and precious stones: and when she was come to Solomon, she communed with him of all, that was in her heart. And Solomon told her all her questions: there was not any thing hid from the King, which he told her not. And when the Queen of Sheba had seen all Solomon's wisdom, and the House that he had built, and the meat of his table, and the sitting of his Servants, and the attendance of his Ministers, and their apparel, and his Cupbearers, and his ascent by which he went up unto the House of The LORD, there was no more Spirit in her. And she said to the King, "It was a true report, that I heard in mine own Land, of thy acts and of thy wisdom. Howbeit I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and, behold, the half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard. Happy are thy Men, happy are these thy Servants which stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom! Blessed be The LORD, thy GOD, Which Delighted in thee, to Set thee on the throne of Israel! Because The LORD Loved Israel for ever, therefore Made He thee King, to do judgment and justice."*—1 Kings x, 1 to 9. Though the wisdom of Solomon drew forth blessings to his GOD from a Heathen; yet the pride of the head and perverseness of the heart, when yielded to, render a Wisdom far Greater than that of Solomon, and a Benevolence Commensurate with That Wisdom, Ineffectual to Redemption and Sanctification.

St. Luke's narrative is thus: *And when the People were gathered thick together, He (JESUS) Began to Say, "This is an evil Generation! they seek a Sign! And there shall no Sign be Given it, but the Sign of Jonas, the Prophet. For as Jonas was a Sign unto the Ninevites; so shall also The SON of Man be to this Generation. The Queen of the South shall rise up in the Judgment with the Men of this Generation, and condemn them; for she came from the utmost parts of the Earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon: and, behold, A GREATER than Solomon is here! The Men of Nineve shall rise up in the Judgment with this Generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonas: and, behold, A GREATER than Jonas is here!"*—Chap. xi, 29 to 32.




△ "When the unclean Spirit is gone out of a Man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest and findeth none: then he saith, 'I will return into my house, from whence I came out;' and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept and garnished. Then goeth he and taketh with himself seven other Spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there; and the last state of that Man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked Generation."—43 to 45.

The meaning of This may be, that where any One, having stifled for a time The HOLY SPIRIT'S Influence in his heart, and yielded himself up to work all manner of iniquity and uncleanness, as the willing Victim of Satan, is brought to serious reflection and regret for his past deeds, and induced to try a change of course of life, seeking the Guidance of DIVINE Grace; yet if afterwards forgetful of That Admonition, and returning to worldly and sensual indulgences, he violently quenches the Light of The SPIRIT in his heart, and becomes more deliberately and desperately wicked than before, being in all things reprobate, to drown the chidings of conscience, he rushes into the vortex of vicious associations and seeks to make Others as much Children of the Devil as himself, continuing on in his trespasses against Law, whether Human or DIVINE, till the last ebb of Life. Such must, as a consequence, be irretrievably Destined to endless perdition and misery in the Life to Come; having, in the truest sense, been guilty of that Unpardonable offending of practical blasphemy against The HOLY GHOST. The mode of construing allusions to evil Spirits, or the Devil, by considering them as figurative expressions, and as personifications only of the evil propensities of our Nature, whether right or wrong in fact, may yet have all the benefit intended as far as warning and admonitions go: though if these Passages are to be received in their letter, it will be understood that the free agency of Man is not shackled by the power of Satan; since it rests within our own breasts whether to give him free admittance and entertainment there or not. *The LORD will not Suffer us to be tempted above that we are able; but will, with the temptation, also Make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it.*—1 Cor. x, 13. So said St. Paul. And St. Peter admonisheth *to be sober and vigilant, because our Adversary, the Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour; whom he exhorts us to resist*, by being *stedfast in the faith*, which is in our LORD and SAVIOUR, JESUS CHRIST. [1 Peter v, 8, 9.] Thus sanctioning the idea of an active Spirit of Evil being opposed to Man, and seeking, by every subtlety, his everlasting destruction. And, at the same time, the Apostle confirms the efficacy of faith in The SPIRIT of GOD, through the Mediation of CHRIST, to frustrate or overpower the assaults of this great Enemy of our peace. When, therefore, an unclean Spirit hath entered into and retained possession of the heart of any One, it is with such Person's neglect of prayer and watchfulness, and with an ultimate acquiescence: and as, from the nature of its character and office, such Spirit of evil can never be at rest; so when by penitence and prayer and the Aid of The HOLY SPIRIT, it goes out of a heart, of which it had hold, then that heart hath rest, and may perpetuate its peace and joy, if it will cherish the Grace of GOD in the love and exercise of It. But if it will not, and it become indifferent to Such a Merciful Interposition of DIVINE Goodness on its behalf, (as he, that is not with CHRIST, is against Him,) then the evil Spirit, returning into it, renders it utterly dead to every Christian feeling, and neglectful of every Christian duty; and Satan, thus encouraged, multiplies his powers and magnifies his triumph over the willing Dupe of his diabolical schemes, and riots uncontrolled over the whole Soul, enflaming all its passions to madness, and shutting for ever the door against reformation or repentance. The consequence of which is, that the last state of that Man is worse, infinitely worse than the first: his iniquities are of a vastly deeper dye, and the measure of

s transgression becomes full: having fallen thus away, it is impossible to renew  
 m unto repentance: yea, having *sinned wilfully, after receiving the knowledge  
 the Truth, there remaineth* for him no Efficacy of CHRIST'S Propitiatory  
*sacrifice for sins: but a certain fearful looking-for of Judgment and fiery Indig-*  
*ation, which shall destroy his Soul's peace* both in time and in Eternity.  
 Heb. x, 26, 27.] And as CHRIST Pronounced that even so should it be to  
 ie faithless and perverse Generation of the Age, in which He Appeared upon  
 arth; so may we take heed lest we be numbered amongst that portion of our  
 eneration, who having been once *Enlightened, and tasted of Heavenly Gifts, and*  
*en made Partakers of The HOLY GHOST, and having tasted the Good Word*  
*of GOD, and the Powers of the World to Come, we should yet fall away, and*  
 ere be no renewal of us again unto repentance: for by thus turning back after  
 wing once put the hand to the plough, we should *crucify The SON of GOD*  
*fresh, and put Him to open shame.*—Heb. vi, 4 to 6.

St. Luke's narrative is thus: "*When the unclean Spirit is gone out of a Man,*  
*he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and finding none, he saith, 'I will*  
*turn unto my house, whence I came out: and when he cometh, he findeth it*  
*rept and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other Spirits more*  
*icked than himself; and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that*  
*an is worse than the first,*"—Luke xi, 24 to 26.

While He yet Talked to the People, behold, His Mother and His Brethren stood without,   
 desiring to speak with Him! Then One said unto Him, "Behold, Thy Mother and  
 Thy Brethren stand without, desiring to speak with Thee!" But He Answered, and  
 Said unto him, that told Him, "Who is My Mother? and Who are My Brethren?"  
 And He Stretched forth His Hand toward His Disciples, and Said, "Behold, My  
 Mother and My Brethren! For Whosoever shall do the Will of My FATHER,  
 Which is in Heaven, the Same is My Brother and Sister and Mother."—46 to 50.

Amidst all the Conscious DIVINITY of His Character, CHRIST Seems  
 throughout His Life on Earth, to have Cherished towards His Mother in the  
 flesh all the Tenderness of the truest Filial Affection. Yet, at the same time,  
 have Studiously Forborne from Giving the slightest ground for any general  
 gard of her as though she had been more than Mortal. Nor did He Allow  
 those Feelings towards Her, from whose Virgin womb He had Sprung, to inter-  
 ere with the Higher and infinitely more exalted Duties, Which, in His Human  
 ature, He Felt He Owed to His FATHER, Which was in Heaven.

CHRIST Descended from the Glories of The GODHEAD, and Took upon  
 im the Form of Man, that through Such Incarnation and His Entire Conformity  
 the Will of His Heavenly FATHER, the Nature of Man might be Restored  
 the Image of GOD, and Man be thus, through CHRIST'S Fulfilment of all  
 ighteousness for Man's sake, Received into DIVINE Favour, and Admitted  
 Joint-Heir with CHRIST of the Glories of His KINGDOM. It is through  
 HRIST Alone, that The KINGDOM of HEAVEN is thus Thrown Open to  
 an; and it is only through faith in Him and His Reconciling and Atoning  
 ediation in our Nature, that *that Inheritance in Life and Glory Everlasting* can  
 e obtained. It is that faith, which worketh by love, that binds Believers in one  
 mmon bond of Brotherhood with Him, Who Offers Freely unto All the most  
 ively and Kindred Affection, if they will but accept His Easy Terms of Prof-  
 red Salvation, and walk where He Walked, in the Paths of Purity and  
 oliness; wherein alone they can taste, even in the Life that is, of pleasantness  
 d peace. It is the Will of our Heavenly FATHER, not only that we adore  
 im with a holy love, but that we love our Brother also, that so we may be  
 iciples of CHRIST indeed. From the Gracious Lips of The Same Blessed

SAVIOUR Proceeded, on another occasion, This Inculcation of Kindred Sympathies, as recorded by St. John: "*This is My Commandment, That ye love One Another, as I have Loved you. Ye are My Friends if ye do whatsoever I Command you: henceforth I Call you not Servants, for the Servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth: but I have Called you Friends.*"—John xv, 12, 14, 15. And in the Epistle to the Hebrews it is asserted: *For verily JESUS Took not on Him the Nature of Angels; but He Took on Him the Seed of Abraham, and was in all things Made like unto His Brethren, that He might be A Merciful and Faithful HIGH PRIEST in Things Pertaining to GOD, to Make Reconciliation for the sins of the People.*—Heb. ii, 16, 17. Thus is our hope raised and sustained of having the unutterable and never-ending Happiness of an Union with CHRIST as our Portion and Inheritance in the Life to Come, on the easy and universally comprehensive Condition of fulfilling the Will of The MOST HIGH, as Revealed to us in His Word, and Imparted to us by His HOLY SPIRIT, and as Set forth in the Gospel of His SON, and in the Writings of His Prophets and Apostles: having the ever Ready and freely Offered Help of That SPIRIT to Enable us so to do. And, in so doing, we shall even here find a peace within us, that the World can neither give nor take away: and, finally, shall be Acknowledged to be of the Kindred and Family of CHRIST, and shall dwell with Him, and He with us; tasting continually of the Rivers of His Pure and Perfect Pleasures, and joining with Angels and Fellow Saints in the exalting and enrapturing exercises of Holy and Heavenly Communion with The SON of GOD and The SAVIOUR of Souls; having our understandings enlightened and continually expanding with the knowledge and admiration of the Wisdom and Power and Holiness of GOD, and of the Wonders He hath Done for the Children of Men.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *There came then His (JESUS') Brethren and His Mother, and, standing without, sent unto Him, calling Him. And the Multitude sat about Him; and they said unto Him, "Behold, Thy Mother, and Thy Brethren without seek for Thee!" And He Answered them, Saying, "Who is My Mother? or My Brethren?" And He Looked round about on them, which sat about Him, and Said, "Behold, My Mother and My Brethren! For Whosoever shall do the Will of GOD, the Same is My Brother, and My Sister and Mother."*—Chap. iii, 31 to 35.


St. Luke's account is as follows: *Then came to Him His Mother and His Brethren, and could not come at Him for the press. And it was told Him by Certain, which said, "Thy Mother and Thy Brethren stand without, desiring to see Thee." And He Answered and Said unto them, "MY Mother and My Brethren are These, which hear the Word of GOD, and do It."*—Chap. viii, 19 to 21.

The Mother of JESUS has here no Distinction Given her by Him, Who is Truth Itself, beyond That, Which He Gives to All, *who do the Will of GOD*: for as the Favoured Disciple also says, "*He, that doeth the Will of GOD, abideth for ever.*"—1 John ii, 17.

CHAP. xiii.—The same day Went JESUS out of the House, and Sat by the Sea-side: and great Multitudes were gathered together unto Him, so that He Went into a ship, and Sat: and the whole Multitude stood on the Shore.—1, 2.

The Influence of our Blessed SAVIOUR'S Words and Works over unprejudiced Minds seems to have been powerful and extensive: for wherever He Went Crowds followed Him, listening with eagerness to the Gracious Words, That Came forth from His Mouth, and dwelling in contemplation with wonder and delight on the Kindness and Love, That All His Actions Manifested: Many gathering, as

they had occasion, the Healing Virtue, That Emanated from Him. The Sea-side appears to have been a place of Favourite Resort with Him. It was amongst Those, who had their business in great Waters, that He Found the most ready faithfulness in His MESSIAHSHIP, and an earnest devotedness to His Call. By being in a boat He was Spared the pressure of the Crowd upon Him, and could Adapt His Position so as with most effect to Make His Voice to be heard.

And He Spake many Things unto them in Parables, Saying, "Behold, a Sower went forth  to sow: and when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way-side; and the fowls came and devoured them up: some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth; and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: and when the Sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away: and some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up and choked them. But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundred fold, some sixty fold, some thirty fold. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear!"—3 to 9.


But amongst this Crowd of Listeners and Attendants there were, doubtless, Some of various Characters, like the Congregations of professing Worshipers of every succeeding Generation and of the present day, who in their hearts were too much Lovers of the World to cherish the purifying and Spiritualizing Truths of DIVINE Revelation in their Souls. The humbling and Selfdenying Doctrines of Christianity were not received by them at all; or not in the spirit of lasting adoption, if with Some a first and faint impression of Their Value were made. The Scoffer and the Infidel, alas! have been peculiar to no age; and the Haughty and Spiritually-Proud have, in every Generation of Mankind, treated with contumely the meek and lowly and contrite Spirit, that true and vital Religion inculcates. This simple and natural Parable of the varying results from the casting of equally good seed in different soils or situations, was forcibly illustrative of the Subject for Contemplation, Which our SAVIOUR then Brought before His Hearers. Though in character with the peculiarly figurative tendency of Hebrew and Asiatic idiom and habits, It Speaks distinctly and impressively to the most plain and unornamented Schools of all other Regions. Nor can Its Application be misunderstood by Any, who are not perversely insensible to the Admonitions of A Heavenly PASTOR. The Parable is in every feature of Its imagery Applicable to our SAVIOUR, as our Great High PRIEST, and to the Precepts He Graciously Diffused; but Which in one Order of the Community, in all Ages, only have been received and cherished to the bringing forth from their hearts the fruits of Righteousness and Holiness of Life. JESUS Came forth from GOD, The LORD of the Heavenly Harvest, to Sow the Seed of Eternal Life in the Souls of Mankind. The hearts of Such, as were likened to the way-side, are those, who, by choice, live in the mazy round of Public association, shutting wilfully out all season or opportunity for reflection, preferring the dizzying and intoxicating objects of sensuality and folly and sin, catching eagerly at every expedient to dismiss sobriety of action or thought, so that whatever they can fly to, in order to drive away even momentary religious impressions, they do with eagerness, thus letting evil imaginations and hurtful passions take away all the elements of a godly and Soul-fructifying Life, as the birds of the Air eagerly carry away and devour the seed dropt by the road-side. The heart of stone is so familiar a figure, and is instanced in the unfeeling vice of avarice, as also in that of sloth, that every effort used to awaken the Possessors to a sense of the infinitely higher worth of Heavenly Riches, the Wages of the labour of holy love and the delight of Heavenly Rest, is used in vain: if they hear, and cannot deny the Truths Delivered, they hear not to the saving of the Soul, and put off to a more convenient season, (which, alas! never arrives,) the

further entertaining of That Wisdom from Above, Which would Sanctify and Soften their hearts. The troubles and worldly anxieties of life are the thorns which choke the seed, even when for a time it has found culture in the mind, probably under youthful and docile influences, when fostered by goodly example: but when entered on the active journey of Life, these early and favourable impressions are but too often obliterated, the heart taking a bent towards Worldly qualifications and sensual objects, and thus the Soul, against the fulness of conviction, sells itself to work evil in the Sight of The LORD. But amidst the general alienation of the Human Heart from its GOD there are exceptions, (and GOD Grant, for the Sake of our Great HIGH PRIEST, that we, each and every One of us, may be Numbered among them,) who receive the Word of DIVINE Truth with gladness of mind, and cherish It in their inmost Souls to their Lives' end; seeking to be amongst those Sheaves, which The LORD of the Harvest will Bring with Him, when at the end of the World, He, by His Angels, Gathereth in His Harvest, and Divideth the Wheat from the Tares. The good ground, into which the Seed of Vital Faith in CHRIST JESUS and His Doctrine profitably Falls, is the pliant, and meek and contrite Heart, such as were those of the Apostles, Disciples, and Martyrs, of the earliest Christian Church, and such as happily have, in all succeeding Ages of that Church, cherished the Truth of the Gospel in the love of It, and Adorned the Doctrine Which it Inculcates, by fully and consistently exemplifying It. Into hearts so prepared the Dew of The HOLY SPIRIT Descends; and the Beams of The SUN of Righteousness Shine fully upon them; and thus the Seed of DIVINE Life Grows and Prospers within them, and Brings forth abundantly, Contributing to the support and rejoicing of Others, as well as of themselves. As in land there is a difference in the quality and situation, and consequent treatment of soils, so is it with the Human heart, even when disposed to receive thankfully the Good Things of GOD. But The LORD of the Harvest Accepteth, according to that which a Man hath, and as he hath improved the greater or less number of Talents, Committed to his care. And as, in The Dispensations of Grace, like the Appointment of the Manna from Heaven in the Wilderness of Canaan, he, that hath little, hath no lack, and he, that hath much, hath nothing over; so if we use the Means of Salvation, according to the Measure Thereof, Which may be Dealt out to us individually, and cherish and bring forth the genuine fruits Thereof, we may meekly yet confidently trust *That* Word of Promise, Which never Faileth, that those fruits will our Gracious LORD Gather into His Garner.

As, therefore, we both hear, and have had brought home to our understandings, These Sublime, and Saving and Sanctifying Truths, may we so apply Them, in the government of our Lives and conversation, that we may reap the rich Fruits Thereof in A SAVIOUR'S Endless Love in the World to Come!

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And He (JESUS) Began again to Teach by the Sea-side: and there was gathered unto Him a great Multitude, so that He Entered into a ship, and Sat in the Sea: and the whole Multitude was by the Sea on the Land. And He Taught them many things by Parables, and Said unto them in His Doctrine, "Hearken! Behold, there went out a Sower to sow; and it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the way-side; and the fowls of the Air came and devoured it up: and some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up because it had no depth of earth: but when the Sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away: and some fell among thorns; and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit: and other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit, that sprang up and increased, and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty and some an hundred."* And He Said unto them, "He, that hath ears to hear, let him hear!"—Chap. iv, 1 to 9.

St. Luke gives this account: *When much People were gathered together, and we come to Him (JESUS) out of every City, He Spake by a Parable: "A Sower went out to sow his seed; and, as he sowed, some fell by the way-side; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the Air devoured it: and some fell upon a rock; and soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture: and some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it: and other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundred fold."* And when He had Said These Things, He Cried, "*He, that hath ears to hear, let him hear!*"—hap. viii, 4 to 8.

And the Disciples came, and said unto Him, "Why Speakest Thou unto them in Parables?"  HE Answered, and Said unto them, "Because it is Given unto you to know the Mysteries of the KINGDOM of HEAVEN; but to them it is not Given. For Whosoever hath, to him shall be Given, and he shall have more Abundance: but Whosoever hath not, from him shall be Taken away even that he hath. Therefore Speak I to them in Parables; because they, seeing, see not; and hearing, they hear not; neither do they understand: and in them is Fulfilled the Prophecy of Esaias (vi, 9, 10.) Which saith, 'By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: for this People's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing; and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted; and, I should Heal them.'"—10 to 15.

The Parabolic Style of Address Adopted by our SAVIOUR could not have been without a Benevolent Design; for in its nature it was likely to make a deep and lasting impression on Hearts, that were earnestly looking for the Coming of The KINGDOM of GOD, and would awaken a lively curiosity to know more of These matters. It is probable, that in this spirit, many Bystanders may have asked the Disciples for a clear and comprehensive interpretation of the Address. Though but too Many amongst them shewed no such desire after arriving at the truth; but let the Lesson fall unprofitably on the ear, and work no goodly influence on the heart. The plainest Truths, which are equally awful in their import, as indisputable in their avowal, such as Death and Judgment, Heaven and Hell, are sounded in many ears, that close themselves in practical deafness to their reception: and sometimes parable or allegory will win attention, and work conviction on hearts not utterly lost to a right feeling. To the haughty ejector of the plain Truths of The Gospel, even the attractive style of allegory could be offered in vain, every avenue of the heart being sealed against the mission of Purifying and Sanctifying and Guiding Grace. But by the meek and patient and humbly inquiring Recipient of DIVINE Instruction, in whatever shape It may be Offered, will the Spiritual Light, It imparts, be treasured and be retained in the Soul with a fondness and a thankfulness and a fidelity which render It, by the Help of The HOLY SPIRIT, fruitful to every good word and work. St. Paul illustrateth, in part, the sense of this Passage, when, in his epistle to the Corinthians, he writes, *The Natural Man receiveth not the Things of The SPIRIT of GOD; for They are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because They are Spiritually discerned.*—1 Cor. ii, 14.

The quotation from Isaiah vi, 9, 10, is in substance to the purport of the next. In Ezekiel, also, the same perverse darkness of the understanding is similarly characterized and accounted for, where he records that *The Word of the LORD Came unto him, Saying, "Son of Man! thou dwellest in the midst of a rebellious House, which have eyes to see, and see not; they have ears to hear, and hear not; for they are a rebellious House."*—Chap. xii, 1, 2. And St. Paul saith, in his Second Epistle to the Corinthians, *If our Gospel be hid, It is hid to them, it are lost; in whom the God of this World hath blinded the minds of them, which believe not; lest the Light of the Glorious Gospel of CHRIST, Who is the*

*Image of GOD, should Shine unto them.*—Chap. iv, 3, 4. So the Prophet Zechariah, speaking of the evil Hearts of unbelief in his day, thus proclaimed the Discernment of The LORD respecting them: *Thus Speaketh The LORD of Hosts, Saying, "Execute true judgment, and shew mercy and compassion every Man to his Brother! and oppress not the Widow nor the Fatherless, the Stranger nor the Poor! and let None of you imagine evil against his Brother in your heart! But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear: yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the Law, and the Words, Which The LORD of Hosts hath Sent in His SPIRIT by the former Prophets; therefore Came a Great Wrath from the LORD of Hosts. Therefore it is come to pass, that as He Cried, and they would not hear; so they cried, and I would not Hear," Saith The LORD of Hosts.*—Chap. vii, 8 to 13.

The Same Gracious GOD, and The Same Loving SAVIOUR, Still Call in Wisdom and in Tender Loving-Kindness; but, alas! how Many of Mankind, though they hear, heed not; and though they cannot but understand, yet refuse to surrender their hearts by faith unto obedience!

St. Mark's continuation of the narrative is as follows: *And when JESUS was Alone, they, that were about Him, with the Twelve, asked of Him the Parable. And He Said unto them, "Unto you it is Given to know the Mystery of The KINGDOM of GOD: but unto them, that are without, All These Things are Done in Parables; that, seeing, they may see, and not perceive; and, hearing, they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be Forgiven them."*—Chap. iv, 10 to 12.

St. Luke's account is thus: *And the Disciples asked JESUS, saying, "What might this Parable be?" And He Said, "Unto you it is Given to know the Mysteries of The KINGDOM of GOD: to Others in Parables; that, seeing, they might not see; and hearing, they might not understand."*—Chap. viii, 9, 10.

The wilful blindness and hardness of heart, from Spiritual pride, continued to be the obstacle to the receiving CHRIST'S Offer of Salvation, even after all the Wonders and Sufferings of His Life, and His Surrendering Himself to Death to Obtain It: *for when St. Paul expounded to the Jews, assembled around him at Rome, and testified to them The KINGDOM of GOD, seeking to persuade them concerning JESUS, both out of the Law of Moses, and out of the Prophets, from morning till evening; and Some believed the Things, which were spoken, and Some believed Them not; the Apostle was led thus paraphrastically to declare that, Well Spake The HOLY GHOST by Esaias, the Prophet, unto our Fathers, [Chap. vi, 9.] Saying, "Go unto this People, and say, 'Hearing, ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and, seeing, ye shall see, and not perceive: for the heart of this People is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing; and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should Heal them.'"*—Acts xxviii, 23 to 27.

"But Blessed are your eyes, for they see! and your ears, for they hear!"—16.

From this verse it seems clear, that it was the predetermination not to receive the Truth, in the love of It, owing to an inveterate spirit of infidelity in Those, whom CHRIST Addressed without Effect; and not any Natural incapacity, or peculiar dulness of apprehension, that rendered the Word of GOD, when Delivered by The SON of GOD Himself, Unprofitable to them. For in Answering His Disciples, who had inquired of Him, why He Spoke in Parables, (and to whom He afterwards Explained the Parable He had Delivered; and which would have

been unnecessary had they previously understood It,) He Pronounced that they were Blest, because they saw Its Tendency in a degree, and were ready to receive the Interpretation of It with gladness, and to adopt It into their hearts.

“For Verily I Say unto you, That Many Prophets and Righteous Men have desired to see those Things, which ye see, and have not seen Them; and to hear those Things, which ye hear, and have not heard Them.”—17.

In proportion as the Influence of The HOLY SPIRIT, in Producing a desire after Spiritual Knowledge, has Predominated in the Soul, so, amidst the hunger and thirst after the prevalence of Righteousness reigning upon the Earth, must have been the measure of anxiety to see The SUN of Righteousness Arising with Healing on His Wings, and to hear the Promised Tidings of Everlasting Peace, Predicted on His Advent. It is true Many of the Patriarchs and Prophets, long before the Actual Advent, had seen, as in a Vision, the Coming of our LORD, and exceedingly rejoiced that the Day of Redemption was Drawing nigh; though, doubtless, their exultation would have been far greater, had they been Permitted to see The SON of GOD in Human Flesh, and to hear Him Who Spake as never Man spake. The Writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, after noticing the Characters of Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and Others, as Examples of the efficacy of a true and lively faith, and a patient possessing of the Soul, observes, *These All died in faith, not having received the (Fulfilment of the) Promises, but having seen Them afar off, and were persuaded of Them, and embraced Them.*—Chap. xi, 13.

St. Peter, insisting that the end of Faith is the Salvation of the Soul, says, “*Of which Salvation the Prophets inquired and searched diligently, and prophesied of the Grace that should Come; searching what or what manner of Time The SPIRIT of CHRIST, Which was in them, did Signify, when It Testified beforehand the Humiliation of CHRIST, and the Glory that should Follow.*”—1 Peter i, 9 to 11.

“Hear ye, therefore, the Parable of the Sower! When any One heareth the Word of The KINGDOM, and understandeth It not, then cometh the Wicked One, and catcheth away That, Which was Sown in his heart. This is he, which received seed by the way-side.”—18, 19. △

It is evident that the growth of Grace needs the nurture of It in the heart; as the seed does that of the natural soil. For the Word of GOD, though Delivered by The SON of GOD Himself, and Holding out in Its exceeding Great and Precious Promises, every Encouragement to seek, by repentance and faith, The KINGDOM of HEAVEN, and Declaring, by what preparation and culture, the heart might receive and cherish the Seeds of the Tree of Eternal Life, was to Such as lent an unwilling and prejudiced ear to It, as a dead letter. With Such is it that Satan works his way to their momentary gratification, but to their final and everlasting ruin: the worst passions of such hearts are set loose, and caught up by the subtle devices of Satan, who flatters and urges on those vicious propensities, till the Soul becomes so desperately wicked, and irreclaimable by all the Efforts of the almost Unbounded Love of GOD, that it is Given over to a state of reprobacy, and will be finally Doomed to the endless Death of inward peace and Spiritual hope.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And JESUS Said unto the Disciples, “Know ye not this Parable! And how then will ye know all Parables? The Sower Soweth the Word: and These are they by the way-side, where the Word is Sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the Word, that was Sown in their hearts.”*—Chap. iv, 13 to 15.



St. Luke's account is as follows: "*Now (JESUS Said) the Parable is this. The Seed is The Word of GOD: Those by the way-side are they, that hear: then cometh the Devil, and taketh away the Word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be Saved.*"—Chap. viii, 11, 12.

GOD Grant that we may be Made, by His HOLY SPIRIT, for CHRIST'S Sake, and through His Intercession, *so strong in faith, that His Word may Abide in us; and that we may Thereby overcome the Wicked One!*—1 John ii, 14.

"But he, that received the seed into stony places, the Same is he, that heareth the Word, and anon with joy receiveth It: yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while; for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the Word, by and by he is offended!"—20, 21.

He that putteth his hand to the plough, and anon looketh back, indifferent to and regardless of the great work of Everlasting Salvation, in Which he once embarked with seeming earnestness and zeal, has awfully unfitted himself for The KINGDOM of GOD. To receive, and to receive with gladness, on the first opening of the Promises of the Gospel, without weighing well that, to insure Their Fulfilment, the Cross of CHRIST must be taken up with equal earnestness, and His Banner bravely borne, is to have not so learnt CHRIST, as to adopt Him as our LORD and MASTER in the true love of Him. It is the mere assent of the mind, without engrafting Religion on the heart, and without fixing it as the vital principle of action on the Soul; but in time of temptation to fall away. Ezekiel has well characterized such mere outward Professors of Faith, when only listening to the Heavenly Call, and before being put to the test of their sincerity by the trials and afflictions of the Christian course: "*Come, (says he,) I pray you, and hear, What is the Word That Cometh forth from The LORD! And they come unto the Prophet of the LORD, as the People cometh, and they sit before the Prophet as The LORD'S People, and they hear the Words of the Prophet; but they will not do them! for with their mouth they shew much love; but their heart goeth after their covetousness: and, lo! the Prophet is unto them as a very lovely song of One, that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument, for they hear his Words; but they do them not!*"—Chap. xxxiii, 30 to 32.

Let us hold fast the form of sound Words, in faith, and in faithfulness, and prove our stedfastness in all seasons and under all circumstances! knowing that He, in Whom we have trusted, is Mighty to Save, and will then be with us even unto the end.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: "*And These are they likewise, which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the Word, immediately receive It with gladness; and have no root in themselves; and so endure but for a time: afterwards when affliction or persecution ariseth for the Word's sake, immediately they are offended.*"—Chap. iv, 16, 17.

St. Luke's is as follows: "*They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the Word with joy: and these have no root; which for a while believe; and in time of temptation fall away!*"—Chap. viii, 13.

"He also that received seed among the thorns is he, that heareth the Word, and the care of this World, and the deceitfulness of riches choke the Word; and he becometh unfruitful."—22.


Alas! how many of These are to be found in every Place, and even within every Place of Worship, hearing the Tidings of Salvation, and having both the Law and the Gospel Delivered to them; but who do not lay the Holy Uncction to their Soul: who seem to honour GOD with their lips, by joining in His Service; but who withhold from Him the only Acceptable offering that can be

made Him for all the Wonders He hath Done in Creation and Redemption, in Providence and Grace, for the Children of Men, the homage of the Soul in meekness and thankfulness, in faith and in obedience. By These even the solemn Worship of The KING of Kings, Whose Throne is from Everlasting and Whose Power is Infinite, is made a mere mockery; and the true Grandeur of Things Spiritual and Eternal is sacrificed to the vain and trifling and fluctuating pursuits and objects of this World, in a deceitful dream of finding happiness, where His Countenance, Who Alone Speaketh Peace and Joy to the Believer, cannot be expected. *They, (as saith St. Paul,) that will be rich, fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown Men in destruction and perdition; for the love of money is the root of all evil; which while Some coveted after, they have erred from the faith.*—1 Tim. vi, 9, 10. "*Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns!*" was the Admonition of JEHOVAH, by His Prophet Jeremiah, *to the Men of Judah and Jerusalem, "lest (as He thus Warned them,) My Fury Come forth like Fire, and Burn, that None can quench It, because of the evil of your doings!"*—Chap. iv, 3, 4.

See the observations on that Passage in the Gospel by this Evangelist, Chap. xi, 6, "*Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in Me!*"

St. Mark's account is as follows: "*And These are they, which are sown among thorns; Such as hear the Word; and the cares of this World, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the Word, and It becometh unfruitful.*"—Chap. iv, 18, 19.

St. Luke's narrative is thus: "*And that, which fell among thorns, are They which, when they have heard, go forth and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this Life, and bring no fruit to perfection.*"—Chap. viii, 14.

"But he, that received seed into the good ground, is he, that heareth the Word, and understandeth It; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, Some an hundred fold, Some sixty, Some thirty."—23. 

These are they, that to faith add knowledge, and to knowledge virtue; who, believing in the need of The MEDIATOR, and in CHRIST as Fulfilling That Office in His Threefold Character of PROPHET, PRIEST, and KING, and trusting in His Righteousness and Sacrifice, as the only justifiable ground of the hope of Salvation from the Everlasting Displeasure of The Almighty CREATOR and DISPOSER of all things, (and which Man universally hath incurred,) yet acknowledge and inwardly feel that faith, without obedience to the Commands and resignation to the Appointments of That Same Gracious CREATOR and BENEFACTOR, is and must be Self-deceptive and unprofitable. Under such a conviction is it, and with reference to the examples of Patriarchs and Prophets, Apostles and Martyrs, as well as That of our SAVIOUR Himself, (Who Went about Doing Good, and Doing the Will of His FATHER Which is in Heaven,) that the truly Faithful in CHRIST JESUS continually strive to work out their own Salvation, though with fear and trembling, lest notwithstanding all that The SON of GOD hath Done to Bring them, by Sanctification of The SPIRIT, to Perfect Purity and Holiness, they should come short of the Terms of DIVINE Reconciliation and Acceptance. In this fear they lay the Gospel Precepts to heart, and by all the Means Put within their power, and by cherishing the Grace of The SPIRIT in the love of It, seek to do all the good that is Put into their hearts and ways to do, whether in relationship and reverence to The FOUNTAIN of All Good, or in charitable feeling towards their Fellow-Creatures, and to the lower Order of Creation made subject to our rule. Let us, therefore, who hear and profess to heed the Word of GOD, be diligent to fulfil Its Directions, and to observe Its Admonitions, seeking, by earnest and continual prayer, for the Help

of Him, Who Alone can Give a profitable increase to our labours of love; ever remembering that as *He, Which hath Called us, is Holy, so should we be holy in all manner of conversation, fortifying our Souls by obeying the Truth through The SPIRIT unto unfeigned love of the Brethren, loving One Another with a pure heart fervently; and being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of GOD, Which Liveth and Abideth for ever.*—1 Peter, i, 15. 22, 23.

Our SAVIOUR, on another Occasion, Addressing His Disciples thus, Said of Himself, "*I am The True Vine, and My FATHER is The HUSBAND-MAN: every Branch in Me, that beareth not fruit, He Taketh away: and every Branch, that beareth fruit, He Purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the Word, Which I have Spoken unto you. Abide in Me, and I in you! As the Branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the Vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me! I am the Vine, ye are the Branches: he, that abideth in Me, and I in him, the Same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me, ye can do nothing. If a Man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and Men gather them, and cast them into the fire; and they are burned. If ye abide in Me, and My Words Abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be Done unto you. Herein is My FATHER Glorified, that ye bear much fruit: so shall ye be My Disciples.*"—John xv, 1 to 8.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: "*And These are they, which are sown in good ground; Such as hear the Word, and receive It, and bring forth fruit, Some thirty fold, Some sixty, and Some an hundred.*"—Chap. iv, 20.

St. Luke thus continues his account: "*But that on the good ground are They, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the Word, keep It, and bring forth fruit with patience.*"—Chap. viii, 15.

△ Another Parable Put He forth unto them, Saying, "*The KINGDOM of HEAVEN is Likened unto a Man, which sowed good seed in his field: but while Men slept, his Enemy came, and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way: but when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the Servants of the Householder came, and said unto him, 'Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?' He said unto them, 'An Enemy hath done this!' The Servants said unto him, 'Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?' But he said, 'Nay, lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them: let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the Reapers, 'Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them! But gather the wheat into my barn!'"*—24 to 30.

Continuing the same Train of Thought on agricultural objects, as illustrative, by similitude, of Spiritual Subjects, our SAVIOUR Turns from a comparison of the heart of Man, and its fitness or unfitness for the reception of DIVINE Truths, as represented by the differing states of the ground, upon which seed might be cast, to that of The KINGDOM of HEAVEN, as then in His Person Come upon the Earth! He then Alludes to the Opposition, which was and would be raised by the Spirit of Evil, and by the pride and prejudice and sensuality of the Worldly-minded to Its reception: which The Great TEACHER Exemplifies by the devices of the Promoter of all evil to intermix bad seed with good, and so destroy the latter's fruitfulness. Every Thing, that Proceeds from GOD is Good and Perfect; and it is His Will, that every Thing should so continue; but the wickedness of Man, acquiescing with the ways of the Wicked One, hath disappointed That Gracious Design of his CREATOR: and though Gifted with the high privilege of free Agency, whereby he may reject the evil, and choose the good, and thus be Made an Heir through faith of the KINGDOM of HEAVEN, he yet, in the perverseness or insensibility of his heart, not only

neglects the culture of the Elements of Eternal Life in his own Soul, but surrenders it up to the delusive dealings of Satan, and strives to make Others as wicked and pernicious as himself.

To guard against the subtle devices of Satan, who, in one shape or another, ever invisibly going about, seeking whom he may devour; we should watch and pray, lest we enter into temptation; for it is whilst Man indulges in the day-dreams of this World's intoxicating joys, and sleeps over the deferred pleasures of a HEAVENLY Inheritance, that the seeds of noxious tendency take head in the Soul, and exhaust what of goodly nurture there might otherwise have been in it.

When the soil is neglected, the seed, however good, sown in it, is checked and hindered in its growth by ill weeds, which grow up with it and overpower it. So is it with the Human heart. The SPIRIT of HOLINESS speaks through the conscience even of a Child's breast, and would Lead it up to GOD. But the sensual affections and a corrupting World, and the pride of Life, check That Holy and Gracious Effort, and, but too often, finally quench altogether that Life of GOD in the Soul of Man. The Word of GOD Reveals the mystery, why Man, who was Created in goodness, and was, by his CREATOR, Pronounced to be good at his Creation, should now be so prone to evil: by having forfeited the Favour, through disobedience of the easily observed Command, of his GOD, he lost the fulness of that faith, which worketh by love; and lent himself to the devices of Satan: the heart, that is not right with GOD, necessarily surrenders itself to work evil in His Sight; and it is only the Redeeming Power and Love of CHRIST, That can Renew it unto Holiness. The existence and propensity to evil form the great trial of Christian faith and virtue.

The harvest is the figure of the Day of Judgment, when every One will receive according to the work done in the flesh; and They that have done good, and that in the spirit of a true and lively faith in CHRIST, and in supplicated reliance on the Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT, will go into Life Everlasting, amidst the Glories of Angels and Saints assembled around The LORD of the harvest: and They that have done evil, in rejection of that faith which worketh repentance before GOD, will be Cast into the fiery furnace of remorse and self-annihilation and despair, increasing as they advance; when, as recorded by the prophet Malachi, "*the Day shall Come, That shall Burn as an oven; and All the proud, yea, and All that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the Day That Cometh shall Burn them up.*" Saith The LORD of Hosts, "*that It shall leave them neither root nor branch! But unto you, that fear My Name, shall the SUN of RIGHTEOUSNESS Arise with Healing on His Wings; and ye shall go forth and grow up as calves of the stall; and ye shall tread down the Wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the Day that I shall Do This.*" Saith The LORD of Hosts.—Mal. iv, 1 to 3. "*In that Day, when I Make up My jewels, I will Spare them, as a Man spareth his own Son, that serveth him. Then shall ye return, and discern between the Righteous and the Wicked: between him, that serveth GOD, and him, that serveth Him not.*"—Mal. iii, 17, 18.

Another Parable Put He forth unto them, Saying, "The KINGDOM of HEAVEN is like to a grain of mustard-seed, which a Man took and sowed in his field: which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree; so that the birds of the Air come and lodge in the branches thereof." —31, 32.

The rapid Succession of These Parabolic Addresses, Concise but forcible as they are, arose, probably, out of the Natural objects immediately under the view of the Audience; or peculiarly familiar to their acquaintance. The KINGDOM

of HEAVEN was before Resembled to good seed in good ground, and most abundantly productive, if rightly cultivated. It is now Likened to a single seed, and that one of the most diminutive in itself, but most expansive of its kind, when allowed its full growth. It seems, from the references in the margin of This Parable, that the general diffusion of the knowledge of the Coming of CHRIST'S KINGDOM was alluded to under a somewhat similar figure, when the Prophets, Isaiah and Micah, foretold that *it shall come to pass in the last days, that the Mountain of The LORD'S House shall be Established in the top of the Mountains, and shall be Exalted above the Hills; and all Nations shall flow unto It.*—Isa. ii, 2: Micah iv, 1.

St. Mark's narrative is as follows: *And JESUS Said, "Whereunto shall We Liken the KINGDOM of GOD? or with what comparison shall We Compare It? It is like a grain of mustard-seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the Earth: but when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the Air may lodge under the shadow of it."*—Chap. iv, 30 to 32.

Another Parable Spake He unto them, "The KINGDOM of HEAVEN is Like unto leaven, which a Woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened."—33.

A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump; and where the Spirit of Holiness is Let in to the heart, and there cherished, It will Influence that heart to hold fast the faith, and to go on unto that Perfection, which ends in an entire Unity with CHRIST: it is gradually enriched with increasing joys through its growth in Grace and advance in Holiness, and by degrees is Wrought into a pure and perfect Spirit. The KINGDOM of HEAVEN is at hand to us All, and is within that Soul, which in meekness and thankfulness, and in the fulness of faith giveth It admission. Let It but be suffered to Engage the affections in even the least degree proportionate to Its Transcendant and Unspeakable Worth, and all other objects of attachment must sink into comparative insignificance and disregard. It is That Light, Which, when the Spiritual eye opens joyfully upon It, Shineth more and more unto the perfect day. The LORD Looketh upon the heart, and when that is susceptible of Heavenly Unction, That Unction is never Withheld; and in whatever Measure It is Dealt out, in reference to infancy or advanced life, or to the greater or lesser powers of the mind, It is Effectual for Its Gracious Object, and Spreads over the whole heart, so as to Fit and Prepare it for Heavenly Communion.

△ All These Things Spake JESUS unto the Multitude in Parables; and without a Parable Spake He not unto them; that It might be Fulfilled, Which was Spoken by the Prophet, [David, in the 78th Psalm, v. 2,] Saying, "I will Open My Mouth in Parables; I will Utter Things, Which have been kept Secret from the Foundation of the World."—34, 35.

In Fulfilment of the Prophecies many Things were Done by JESUS, not however, because They were Foretold, but because they were Essential to His Mission and Character: and Their having been Foretold, (through the Inspiration of The HOLY GHOST, Which Revealed Them, though oftentimes faintly to Holy Men of old,) was to give occasion, amongst other expedients, to a conviction, that JESUS was The long Promised and expected MESSIAH, by Whom All, That could Manifest the Office of A MEDIATOR between GOD and Man, was Accomplished.

Towards the conclusion of his Epistle to the Romans, St. Paul, in confirmation of the partially obscure nature of Prophecy, observed, that *the Revelation of the Mystery, Which was kept Secret since the World began, was then Made Manifest; and by the Scriptures of the Prophets, according to the Commandment of The Everlasting GOD, made Known to all Nations for the obedience of faith.*—Rom. xvi, 25, 26. And again, in his First Epistle to the Corinthians, St. Paul writes, *We speak the Wisdom of GOD in a Mystery, even the Hidden Wisdom, Which GOD Ordained before the World unto our Glory; Which None of the Princes of this World knew: nor had they known It, they would not have crucified The LORD of Glory.* Now he adds) *we have received, not the Spirit of the World, but The SPIRIT Which of GOD, that we might know the Things, That are freely Given to us of GOD; Which Things also we speak, not in the words, which Man's wisdom teacheth, but Which The HOLY GHOST Teacheth, comparing Spiritual Things with Spiritual. But the Natural Man receiveth not the Things of The SPIRIT of GOD; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know Them; because They are spiritually Discerned.*—1 Cor. ii, 7, 8, 12 to 14. In his Epistle to the Ephesians, St. Paul, with a holy exultation yet with equal humility, writes, that *the Grace of GOD was Given unto him, that he should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable Riches of CHRIST, and to make all Men see What is the Fellowship of the Mystery, Which from the beginning of the World had been Hid in GOD, to the Intent that now unto the Principalities and Powers in Heavenly Places, might be known by the Church the Manifold Wisdom of GOD, according to the Eternal Purpose, Which He Purposed in CHRIST JESUS, our LORD.*—Eph. iii, 6 to 11. So also in his Epistle to the Colossians the same Apostle mentions *the Mystery, Which had been hid from Ages and from Generations, but when was (as it still is) Made Manifest to the Saints.*—Chap. i, 26.

St. Mark's narrative is thus; *And with many Such Parables Spake JESUS the Word unto them, as they were able to bear It: but without a Parable Spake He it unto them: and when they were alone He Expounded all Things to His Disciples.*—Chap. iv, 33, 34.

Then JESUS Sent the Multitude away, and Went into the House. And His Disciples came unto Him, saying, "Declare unto us the Parable of the tares of the field." HE Answered, and Said unto them, "He, that soweth the good seed is The SON of Man; the field is the World; the good seed are the Children of The KINGDOM: but the tares are the Children of the Wicked One; the Enemy, that sowed them, is the Devil: the Harvest is the End of the World, and the Reapers are the Angels. As, therefore, the tares are gathered, and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this World; The SON of Man shall Send forth His Angels, and they shall gather out of His KINGDOM all things that offend, and them, which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a Furnace of Fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the Righteous shine forth as the Sun in The KINGDOM of their FATHER. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear!"—36 to 43.

As The KINGDOM of HEAVEN in the heart of Man, when there It has taken Root, Goes on unto Perfection; so was the Effect of the Preaching of CHRIST, though thus Clothed in the figurative style of Parables, on the hearts those of the Multitude around Him, as well as of His Disciples, who were devoutly and devoutly disposed to learn the Way of Salvation, and, having learnt, fastidiously to keep It. They heard, and though they understood not fully at first, doubtless, they dwelt fondly in meditation on the Sayings of The Great TEACHER of Righteousness, and sought, in the fulness of faith, from Him the position of the Hidden Truths. And thus had they the natural veil Taken from before their Spiritual eyes. The same teachable and faithful Spirit should be cultivated in us, that was manifested in them; and in all doubts and difficulties

should we, when searching the Scriptures, compare Their Doctrines and Revelations, seeking That Grace, Which Alone Guideth both to Wisdom and sound Knowledge, that we may divide rightly in our minds and treasure in our hearts the whole Gospel of Salvation.

The Exposition, thus Given by our SAVIOUR, in the Text of the Parable particularly inquired after, is at once Clear, Comprehensive and Striking; Disclosing the Great and Fundamental Truths of the Christian Dispensation; that every Good and Perfect Gift Cometh from ABOVE, from The FATHER of Light, and Descends upon Man through The SON of GOD, as MEDIATOR between GOD and Man. The Omniscience of The DEITY is Manifested by the Exercise of DIVINE Election; for The LORD Knoweth them, that are His; and in Furtherance of That Discriminating Power, The ALMIGHTY thus Opens The KINGDOM of HEAVEN to all Believers. The awful reverse in the fate of Those, who from pride and perverseness of heart will not have The LORD to Rule over them, is thus fearfully Set forth, as a Warning to all Mankind: a state awaiting the Reprobate and Unbelieving, where no peace can ever come, and where anguish and bitterness of Soul will know no end. At the great Day of Universal Judgment, these two most opposite and ever distinct Conditions will present themselves, and from the Judgment then Delivered upon every Soul alive, no appeal can be made: It will be Irreversible. To have offended against The MAJESTY of GOD, and to have done so exceedingly amiss, as not even to have sought The DIVINE Pardon and Reconciliation, through the Freely Offered Mediation of The SON of GOD, in penitence and faith, will then be to perish everlastingly, bereaved of every Means or hope of escape; since the Day of Salvation was so rejected. But of the Brightness of the Celestial Glory Awaiting the Redeemed in CHRIST JESUS, the Sun in his strength is thus presented as an Image.

The Spirit of evil, that besets Mankind, is represented under various names and figures both in the Old and New Testaments. In the Old it is called *the Serpent, which beguiled Eve to eat the Forbidden fruit.*—Gen. iii, 13. In 1 Chron. xxi, 1; in Job i, 6, ii, 2, 3; and in Zech. iii, 1, it is called *Satan*. In the New it is called *the unclean Spirit*: [Matt. xii, 43.] *the Old Serpent called the Devil and Satan*: [Rev. xii, 9.] by St. Paul, *That Wicked*: [2 Thess. ii, 8.] Some imagine that it is not an embodied Spirit from its universality, and from its influencing the Spiritual or intellectual part of Man; and, therefore, consider it to be only a Personification of the evil that is in Man, as of himself, and cherished to his utter destruction; and only effectually expelled by prayer, and penitence, and faith in CHRIST, through the Aiding and pervading Grace of The SPIRIT of GOD. But the Scripture is express to the contrary; and in such speculative opinions it is best not to indulge: but, at all events, it should ever be borne in mind, that the evil within us is enough to overwhelm us, if we seek not and do not rely upon the Grace of GOD to enable us to overcome it: remembering, at the same time, that whatever additional excitement to wickedness may assail us from without, The SPIRIT of The ALMIGHTY is both Able and Willing to Make us more than Conquerors over it for CHRIST'S Sake.

The Last Judgment seems also foretold by the Prophet Joel under the same figure: *Let the Heathen be wakened and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat! For The LORD hath Spoken, Saying, "There will I Sit to Judge all the Heathen round about. Put ye in the sickle! for the harvest is ripe! come, get you down! for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great."*—Joel iii, 8, 12, 13. The Prophetic view of the Consummation of All Things is thus displayed by St. John in the Record of The Revelations Made to him: *I looked, and behold a white Cloud, and upon the Cloud ONE Sat, Like unto The SON of Man, having*

on His Head a Golden Crown, and in His Hand a sharp Sickle; and Another Angel came out of the Temple, crying with a loud voice to Him, That Sat on the Cloud, "*Thrust in Thy Sickle, and Reap! for the Time is come for Thee to Reap: for the Harvest of the Earth is ripe!*" And He, That Sat on the Cloud, Thrust in His Sickle on the Earth; and the Earth was Reaped. And another Angel came out of the Temple, Which is in Heaven, he also having a sharp Sickle; and another Angel came out from the Altar; which had power over fire, and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp Sickle, saying, "*Thrust in thy sharp Sickle, and gather the clusters of the Vine of the Earth; for her grapes are fully ripe:*" and the Angel thrust in his Sickle into the Earth, and gathered the Vine of the Earth; and cast it into the Great Winepress of the Wrath of GOD.—Rev. xiv, 14 to 19. The Picture of the Instrument of Torture to the Wicked in the Last Day, as represented in the Text under the figure of a Furnace of Fire, is exhibited in the Revelations to St. John under that of a Lake of Fire burning with Brimstone: [Rev. xix, 20.] and in another place as the Lake of Fire and Brimstone: [Rev. xx, 10.]

The Glorious Appearance of the Righteous in the Visible Presence and KINGDOM of GOD, is thus encouragingly compared to the most glorious and animating Object of Creation, the Sun: and Daniel, at the conclusion of his Prophecies, has adopted a similar image; and with reference to the same Event, saying, *And Many, that sleep in the dust of the Earth shall awake; Some to Everlasting Life; and Some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they, that be wise, shall shine as the Brightness of the Firmament: and they, that turn Many to Righteousness, as the Stars for ever and ever.*—Dan. xii, 2, 3.

"Again The KINGDOM of HEAVEN is Like unto treasure hid in a field: the which, when a Man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof, goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field."—44.

When the Grace of GOD hath Enlightened the understanding of Man, so as to Give him the fullest insight into the Greatness and Goodness of his CREATOR, of Which the Human Soul, in this its terrestrial state, is capable, and to enable him to form a right estimation of the object and end of this Life, and of the Glorious Scenes that await the Righteous and Redeemed Spirits in their Celestial Abode, then, indeed, does every other pursuit, however glittering in the eyes of the Worldly-minded seem, as it really is, vain and unprofitable, excepting only as it can be made tributary to the great Purpose of obtaining an Inheritance amongst the Saints in HEAVEN amidst the Glories of The REDEEMER'S KINGDOM. And wisely is it elsewhere asked, "*What shall a Man get, if he gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul?*" But the Inheritance in the Life to Come, of which a true and lively faith in CHRIST is the only price, is not only an Ever-Enduring Substance, over which Time has no lessening influence, but is thus equally within the purchase of the Poor, as of the Rich in this World's goods. St. Paul said, *What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for CHRIST; yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the Knowledge of CHRIST JESUS, my LORD.*—Phil. iii, 7, 8.

Isaiah, with his Prophetic and delighted view of the Abodes of Blessedness awaiting the Faithful, thus beautifully and encouragingly wrote to all future Ages, saying, *Ho, Every One, that thirsteth, come ye to the Waters! and he, that hath no money, come ye, buy, and eat! yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money and without price! Wherefore do ye spend money for that, which is not bread? and your labour for that, which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me; and eat ye that, which is good; and let your Soul delight itself in fatness!*—Chap. lv, 1, 2.



"Again, The KINGDOM of HEAVEN is Like unto a Merchantman, seeking goodly pearls; who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it."—45, 46.

As the Merchant's object is great temporal gain, even at the hazard of perils by Sea, and perils by Robbers; and no effort is left by him untried to accomplish his aim to heap up riches, which perish to him with this World's enjoyment; so, with the Soul, that seeketh Spiritual Wealth, *the Merchandize Whereof is infinitely better than the merchandize of silver, and the Gain Thereof than fine gold*, there is a perseverance towards Its attainment, through evil report and good report, which, Aided by the supplicated Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT, never faileth. The faithful Searcher after Heavenly Riches knows that none but They can satisfy the earnest desire of his Soul; and that the whole World would be no gain in comparison with Them. With the Wisest of Mankind we may confidently say, *Happy is the Man, that findeth Spiritual Wisdom, and the Man that getteth Spiritual Understanding; more Precious are They than rubies; and all the things we can desire are not to be compared unto Them.*—Prov. iii, 13 to 15, viii, 11. The way to Spiritual Wisdom and Holiness is the only way to find That Pearl, Which is above all price, except the attainment of The KINGDOM of HEAVEN, Which, indeed, is the Exchange for, or rather, the Realising of It.

"Again, The KINGDOM of HEAVEN is Like unto a net, that was cast into the Sea, and gathered of every kind; which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the World: the Angels shall come forth, and sever the Wicked from among the Just; and shall cast them into the Furnace of Fire: There shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."—47 to 50.

Another forcible Comparison from one of the most familiar images before the daily observation of CHRIST'S Followers, did He here Introduce, that of the draught of fishes in a net, some of them serviceable and some worthless and obnoxious. So will it be in the Last Day of Universal Judgment, when the past character of every Soul of Human Kind will be faithfully and fully laid open to All; and the great Line of Distinction between the Good and Evil amongst them, will be fairly and obviously Drawn. Then will the Self-willed and unprofitable Servants of An Ever Gracious and Indulgent LORD and MASTER be Cast out into that darkness of the Soul, which will be ever grievous to them, and from which there will be no escape, and into which no ray of hope will enter. Whilst the Good and the Faithful and Believing, will be Blessed for evermore with the Light of Heavenly Glory, and with the Effusion of Heavenly Love, a Love All Love Surpassing.

△ JESUS Saith unto them, "Have ye understood all These Things?" They say unto Him, "Yea, LORD!" Then Said He unto them, "Therefore, every Scribe, which is instructed unto The KINGDOM of HEAVEN, is like unto a Man, that is an Householder, which bringeth forth of his treasure things new and old."—51, 52.

The knowledge of the Way to HEAVEN, and the Means of acquiring an Inheritance in Its KINGDOM, are open unto All; and JESUS CHRIST is That Way. A judicious Householder so prudently directs and disposes all things under his charge, that each is in its appropriate place, and is brought forward in its fit season. So should Each of us, in Matters relating to the Household of Faith, suit the occasion and the opportunity, that our knowledge in the application and use of Them may be directed to the Glory of GOD, and the good of our own and of Others Souls. May our thirst for DIVINE Knowledge be tempered

with That Wisdom, Which Cometh from Above! remembering that *the lips of the Righteous feed Many; but that Fools die for want of wisdom.*—Prov. x, 21.

And it came to pass, that when JESUS had Finished These Parables, He Departed thence. And when He was Come into His Own Country, He Taught them in their . Synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, "Whence hath this Man This Wisdom, and These Mighty Works?"—53, 54.

Universal as was the Object of CHRIST'S Incarnation and Intercession; yet is it pleasing to behold in Him, in Whom All Wisdom and Power Dwelt, the tender attachments towards Kindred and Neighbourhood, which we are wont to regard as traits peculiarly commendatory in the Human character, a love for the Place of our Nativity, and for the haunts and associations of our onward life. In this Spirit our SAVIOUR Retired for a time from the more public and diffusive Seat of His MINISTRY unto the humble and despised Scene of His Life and Conversation, before He fully Entered on That MINISTRY. And there He strove to Work the Work of Reformation unto Salvation amongst Those, under whose observation and favour He had grown up from Infancy to Manhood; but who had not acknowledged, nor, perhaps, even so much as suspected The DIVINITY of His Person; since, it should seem, He did not Proclaim The Great MISSION, on Which He Came down from Heaven, until in the full Maturity of Manhood, and when His Forerunner, John the Baptist, had published that *The KINGDOM of HEAVEN was at Hand*. It seems that CHRIST'S Preaching Struck His Auditors, though no Strangers, perhaps, to His previous Manners and Sentiments, with surprise and astonishment, as Displaying both Knowledge and Wisdom so greatly Surpassing the natural advantages, which could have been derived from His Station and Pursuits in earlier Life. For further remarks applicable to these circumstances in our SAVIOUR'S History, see the reflections on verse 23 of Chapter ii.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And JESUS Went out from thence, and Came into His Own Country; and His Disciples follow Him. And when the Sabbath Day was come, He Began to Teach in the Synagogue: and Many, hearing Him, were astonished, saying, "From whence hath this Man These Things? and what Wisdom is This, Which is Given unto him, that even Such Mighty Works are Wrought by his hands?"*—Chap. vi, 1, 2.

St. Luke mentions the same Incident in our SAVIOUR'S Life, but more minutely describes the tenor of His Preaching: *And JESUS Returned in the Power of The SPIRIT into Galilee: and there went out a Fame of Him through all the Region round about: and He Taught in their Synagogues; being glorified of All. And He Came to Nazareth, where He had been Brought up: and, as His Custom was, He Went into the Synagogue on the Sabbath Day, and Stood up for to Read: and there was delivered unto Him the Book of the Prophet Esaias; and, when He had Opened the Book, He Found the Place, Where it was Written, "The SPIRIT of The LORD is upon Me, because He hath Anointed Me to Preach the Gospel to the Poor: He hath Sent Me to Heal the Broken-hearted, to Preach Deliverance to the Captives, and Recovering of Sight to the Blind, to Set at liberty them, that are bruised; to Preach the Acceptable Year of The LORD!" And He Closed the Book, and He Gave It again to the Minister, and Sat down. And the eyes of all them, that were in the Synagogue, were fastened on Him. And He Began to Say unto them, "This day is This Scripture Fulfilled in your ears!" And All bare Him witness, and wondered at the Gracious Words, Which Proceeded out of His Mouth. And they said, "Is not This Joseph's Son?" And He Said unto them, "Ye will surely say unto Me this Proverb, "Physician, Heal thyself! Whatsoever we have heard Done in Capernaum, Do also here in Thy*

Country!" And He Said, "Verily I Say unto you, No Prophet is accepted in his own country. But I Tell you of a Truth, Many Widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the Heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the Land: but unto None of them was Elias Sent, save unto Sarepta, a City of Sidon, unto a Woman, that was a Widow! And many Lepers were in Israel, in the time of Eliseus the Prophet: and None of them was Cleansed, saving Naaman, the Syrian!"—Luke iv, 14 to 27.

△ "Is not this the Carpenter's Son? Is not his Mother called Mary? and his Brethren James, and Joscs, and Simon and Judas? and his Sisters, Are they not all with us? Whence then hath this Man all these things?" And they were offended in Him. But JESUS Said unto them, "A Prophet is not without honour, save in his own Country, and in his own House." And He Did not many Mighty Works there, because of their unbelief.—55 to 58.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: "*Is not this the Carpenter, the Son of Mary, the Brother of James, and Joscs, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his Sisters here with us?*" And they were offended at Him. But JESUS Said unto them, "*A Prophet is not without honour, but in his own Country, and among his own Kin, and in his own House!*" And He could there Do no Mighty Work, save that He Laid His Hands upon a few sick Folk; and Healed them. And He Marvelled because of their unbelief.—Chap. vi, half of 3 to 6.

St. Luke's continuation is thus: *And all They in the Synagogue, when they heard These Things, were filled with wrath, and rose up, and thrust Him out of the City, and led Him unto the brow of the Hill, whereon their City was built, that they might cast Him down headlong: but He, Passing through the midst of them, Went His Way; and Came down to Capernaum, a City of Galilee; and Taught them on the Sabbath Days. And they were astonished at His Doctrine; for His Word was with Power.*—Chap. iv, 28 to 32.

See the observations on St. Matthew ii, verse 23.


The Traits of Character, that were Foretold would Distinguish The MESSIAH, were Exemplified by Him; and They Manifested to the penitent Believer, (who felt the need of A MEDIATOR for Pardon and Reconciliation with A Justly Offended GOD,) equally the Benevolence as the Magnificence of His Doings, that He was That Very SAVIOUR, Who was to Come into the World, to Save Sinners, and to Bring in Sanctification unto Holiness by His SPIRIT in Perfect Righteousness. But how few, alas, among His many Hearers, would yield themselves up submissively and thankfully to His Doctrine and His Guidance! On the contrary, in a perverted zeal for the Honour of JEHOVAH, the Many sought to take away by cruelty and violence, and without appeal to the forms even of Justice, the most Precious of Lives; by which premature Sacrifice Much of His Goodly Council and Exemplary Conduct would have been lost for ever; though equally might the Great End of Man's Redemption have been Wrought by the Free-Will Offering of Himself.

The lowliness of The SAVIOUR'S Human Appearance was strongly Foretold by Isaiah, when he described Him as *Whom Man despiseth and the Nation abhorreth, and as a Servant of Rulers.*—Chap. xlix, 7.

On another occasion, as recorded by St. John, when our SAVIOUR Declared that He was "*the Bread, Which Came down from Heaven,*" the Jews, therefore, murmuring at Him, said, "*Is not this Jesus, the Son of Joseph, whose Father and Mother we know? How is it then that he saith, 'I Came down from Heaven.'*"—Chap. vi, 41, 42.

HE Came to His Own, and His Own received Him not: and though He Came, by the Sacrifice of Himself, freely to Offer Salvation unto all Men; yet of Men was He despised and rejected.—Isaiah liii.

How often are the most Meek and Pious amongst a Community despised by Members of their own Family and Neighbourhood, and set at nought as Hypocrites and Self-righteous or Over-righteous; and as assuming to be above their Equals or even their Superiors in DIVINE Estimation! Amidst evil report and good report it is, however, the duty of All, as good Soldiers and Fellow-Labourers in the Cause of CHRIST and of His Gospel, to persevere, and not to be ashamed of Him or His Gospel. Then may we hope that He will, by His SPIRIT, Effectuate That Mighty Work in our hearts, Which shall Regenerate and Make them His by Adoption and Grace.

CHAP. xiv.—At that time Herod, the Tetrarch, heard of the fame of JESUS, and said unto his Servants, "This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the Dead; and, therefore, mighty works do shew forth themselves in him!" For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put him in Prison for Herodias' sake, his Brother Philip's Wife. For John said unto him, "It is not lawful for thee to have her." And when he would have put him to death, he feared the Multitude; because they counted him as a Prophet. But when Herod's birth-day was kept, the Daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod: whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask. And she, being before instructed of her Mother, said, "Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger!" And the King was sorry: nevertheless, for the oath's sake, and them, which sat with him at meat, he commanded it to be given her. And he sent, and beheaded John in the Prison. And his head was brought in a charger and given to the Damsel: and she brought it to her Mother.—1 to 11. 

It seems surprising that such an idea, as that of a restoration to life of a Person so palpably dead as John, should have entered into the imagination of Herod, unless the Prophecy, of a Resurrection of The HOLY ONE, in Job, might have raised the idea. For Herod seems to have regarded John as a Heavenly-gifted Personage, and to have persecuted him only at the instigation of her, whose fascinations thus led him on through the crime of adultery to that of murder. The compunction, which he felt at directing this last act of cruelty and injustice to be inflicted on John, is a proof of the just estimate he had formed of John's exalted and superior character. How often does the yielding to illicit love lead on to a fatal career in vice, sinking the Soul deeper and deeper, and with rapid strides, into the inextricable abyss of crime. The observance of an oath by the connected commission of a far more heinous sin than the infraction of that oath, was the dictate of the false pride, which the homage of the World produces. The same Doctrine, which John had so earnestly inculcated in preaching Repentance and the Coming of The KINGDOM of GOD, Herod might have heard that JESUS Delivered; and thence have drawn his supposition, that the Spirit of John had revived.

St. Luke gives rather a different turn to the history in the following manner: *Now Herod the Tetrarch, heard of All, That was Done by JESUS, (in Preaching the Gospel and Healing every where:) And he was perplexed, because that it was said of Some, "that John was risen from the Dead," and of Some, "that Elias had appeared;" and of Others, "that One of the old Prophets was risen again." And Herod said, "John have I beheaded; but Who is This, of Whom I hear Such Things?" And he desired to see Him.*—Chap. ix, 7 to 9. The material fact, however, that of the Fame of JESUS having reached Herod, and excited his curiosity, and, perhaps, awakened his anxiety, is established by all the three Evangelists.

The short, but impressive and affecting history of the murder of John the Baptist, introduced, as it were, in a parenthesis, is confirmatory of the excellence of the Doctrine taught by him, and of the unbending and uncompromising firm-

ness, with which he disseminated it: not being deterred from avowing and even enforcing it in the presence of a Tyrant armed with despotic power, and urged on to its harshest exercise by the wounded pride of the lawless Partner of his throne and bed. This unshaken constancy of John in reproofing vices in high Places, confirms the justness of the Selection of him as the Forerunner of The MESSIAH, in aiming at redeeming Souls from the bondage of Sin, and the subtle devices of Satan.

The law of Nature, speaking through the conscience, pronounces it unjust, and an offence against the established usage of every Society, even the most Barbarous, for one Brother to take from Another the Wife of his bosom. By the Levitical law it was declared, *If a Man shall take his Brother's Wife, it is an unclean thing.*—Lev. xx, 21. According to St. Mark, it appears that even the imprisonment of John was the effect of Herodias's exasperated and malignant Spirit influencing Herod, and in a degree hostile to his own wish: for it is thus recorded by this Evangelist: *And King Herod heard of JESUS, (for His Name was Spread abroad,) and he said, "That John, the Baptist, was risen from the Dead; and, therefore, mighty works do shew forth themselves in him.."* Others said, *"That it is Elias;"* and Others said, *"That it is a Prophet; or as One of the Prophets."* But when Herod heard thereof, he said, *"It is John, whom I beheaded: he is risen from the Dead!"* For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in Prison for Herodias' sake, his Brother Philip's Wife: for he had married her. For John had said unto Herod, *"It is not lawful for thee to have thy Brother's Wife."* Therefore Herodias had a quarrel against him, and would have killed him; but she could not: for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just Man and an holy; and observed him: and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly. And when a convenient day was come, that Herod, on his birth-day, made a supper to his Lords, high Captains, and chief Estates of Galilee; and when the Daughter of the said Herodias came in and danced, and pleased Herod, and them that sat with him, the King said unto the Damsel, *"Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee!"* and he swore unto her, *"Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my Kingdom!"* And she went forth, and said unto her Mother, *"What shall I ask?"* And she said, *"The head of John, the Baptist."* And she came in straightway with haste unto the King, and asked, saying, *"I will that thou give me, by and by, in a charger, the head of John, the Baptist."* And the King was exceeding sorry; yet for his oath's sake, and for their sakes, which sat with him, he would not reject her. And immediately the King sent an Executioner, and commanded his head to be brought: and he went and beheaded him in the Prison: and brought his head in a charger; and gave it to the Damsel; and the Damsel gave it to her Mother. And when his Disciples heard of it, they came and took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb.—Chap. vi, 14 to 29. Disappointed in her first effort of killing John, Herodias was not content with procuring his imprisonment, which might have been for life, but suffered a murderous purpose to rankle in her breast; and, reckless of its destroying influence over even Herod's peace, of the baneful example it might prove in forming the mind of her own youthful and graceful Offspring, and, above all, of the direct tendency it must have had to make shipwreck of her Soul's present and future blessedness, eagerly caught the earliest opportunity of satiating her revenge, at the sacrifice of every object of natural desire or justifiable ambition in her Child. John's career thus closed without his having witnessed the Persecutions and Sufferings of his Great LORD and MASTER; for Whose Sake he, like St. Paul, doubtless, counted all things but as worthless, so that he but gained an Access to His KINGDOM, Which is in Heaven. Short was the time allowed the Baptist to prepare himself for the stroke of Death: but,


doubtless, the same intrepid dignity, that had previously displayed itself in all his past actions, then diffused a lustre and an example of deep impressiveness on the minds of the Executioner and of Such Others, as were present at his dying moments. Already, by the radiated glory of his countenance, and the exulting utterance of his faithful hope and assurance of Salvation, must he have seemed in the Bosom of his MAKER and his JUDGE; on Whom the Everlasting Destiny of every Human Soul depends.

*The Adulteress will hunt for the precious Life*, said Solomon; [Prov. vi, 26.] and how was this exemplified in Herodias! How, therefore, should all intercourse with such a Spirit, however clad in personal beauty or accomplishments, be shunned!

Vows should be such as The LORD, in the very making Approves: and then the performance or observance of them should be sacredly fulfilled. But rash vows should be shunned: and impious vows abandoned, and their pardon sought by repentance and, as far as may be, atonement. *Be not rash with thy mouth; and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before GOD!*—Eccles. v, 2.

And his [John's] Disciples came, and took up the body and buried it; and went and told JESUS.—12.

What might have been the fate of the Baptist's head, whether it was kept in Herodias's closet, as a perpetual repast to her savage vindictiveness, or how otherwise disposed of, is matter of conjecture: it might seem from the Text, that the head was not sepulchred with the body. But in the general Resurrection in a state how glorified shall be their reunion! And how awful will be the contrasted condition of Herodias and of Herod! Oh, that the first risings of vice and vicious desires in the Human heart were looked at in their probably increasing and finally fatal consequences!

When JESUS Heard of it, He Departed thence by ship, into a desert Place apart: and when the People had heard thereof, they followed Him on foot out of the Cities.—13. 

Even CHRIST seems to have Sought retirement to Calm the troubling Thoughts, and Soothe the natural Sorrow Occasioned by the fatal close of a Life so devoted to His Service, and so successful in preparing the Way for the Fulness of That Dispensation of Light and Spiritual Life, Which He Himself Came to Diffuse. Though necessarily, as respected the Spiritual state of John himself, CHRIST Knew that his labours had ended, and that he had gone to his Heavenly Reward; and though Wicked Ones in high Places had destroyed his body, they now had no more that they could do to disturb his Soul's peace, or stay his path to Heaven's unsullied Joy. The continuing prevalence of evil on the Earth, and, when all the Springs of Heavenly Mercy were suffered to Send their Resuscitating Waters to Mankind, the Experience that so Many set them at nought, and turned away from them, preferring the polluting streams of their own base and corrupt passions, doubtless, preyed heavily also on The SAVIOUR'S Pure and Compassionate Spirit. Unto us the Conduct of our SAVIOUR should Teach the profitable Lesson of unbounded submission to the Will of GOD: and, amidst the wounds which our natural affection may receive from the sundering the ties of Kindred or Connection, or of faithful Friends, to acknowledge that, as The LORD Taketh away, it was He Who Gave, and therefore, that Blessed should be the Name of The LORD. Grief should never be inordinately indulged in: but, to a certain extent, its influence over the Soul bespeaks a feeling creditable to our Nature, and consistent with the most correct Principles of Religion.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And the Apostles gathered themselves together unto JESUS, and told Him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught. And He Said unto them, "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert Place, and rest awhile!" For there were Many coming and going; and they had no leisure so much as to eat. And they departed into a desert Place by ship privately.*—Chap. vi, 30 to 32.

There is a sacredness in grief that for a season requires privacy: and the business and turmoils of the World but ill adapt themselves to the Spiritual benefit resulting from the contemplation of the precariousness of this Life, and the awfulness of an immediate entrance upon the endless Life to Come.

St. Luke thus states it: *And the Apostles, when they were returned, told JESUS all that they had done. And He Took them, and Went aside privately into a desert Place, belonging to the City, called Bethsaida.*—Chap. ix, 10.

And JESUS Went forth, and Saw a great Multitude, and was Moved with Compassion toward them, and He Healed their Sick.—14.

The Benevolence, That invariably Governed the Exercise of CHRIST'S obviously more than Human Power, we might have conjectured would have Flashed irresistible conviction on All, that witnessed Its Ministration, and Presented admissively to them, if not The DIVINITY Itself, yet Such an Associated Being, and so Manifesting an Union with The DIVINE Mind, as to call for the most ready compliance with the Suggestion, and the most implicit reliance on the Promises and Prophecies Which, with equal Majesty and Mildness, The MESSIAH Delivered; even if They had not brought the Attendants around Him in religious adoration on their knees before Him. But, though Blessed are they, that have not seen and yet have believed in Him as both GOD and Man, and have sought Him as The Great PHYSICIAN of Souls, and have found Grace to Save them in every time of need; still Blessed also, doubtless, are they, through all the Generations of Mankind, to whom, though Strangers even to His Name, His Redecming Uction has been Extended.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And the People saw Them (JESUS and His Disciples) departing; and Many knew Him, and ran afoot thither out of all Cities, and outwent Them, and came together unto Him. And JESUS, when He Came out, Saw much People, and was Moved with Compassion toward them; because they were as sheep not having a Shepherd; and He Began to Teach them Many Things.*—Chap. vi, 33, 34.

St. Luke's continuation is thus: *And the People, when they knew it, followed JESUS: and He Received them, and Spake unto them of The KINGDOM of GOD; and Healed them, that had need of Healing.*—Chap. ix, 11.

Blessed be GOD and Blessed be His Holy SON: *we have not an High Priest Which cannot be Touched with the Feeling of our infirmities.*—Heb. iv, 15.

△ And when it was evening, His Disciples came to Him, saying, "This is a desert Place, and the time is now past: Send the Multitude away, that they may go into the Villages, and buy themselves victuals!" But JESUS Said unto them, "They need not depart: give ye them to eat!" And they say unto Him, "We have here but five loaves and two fishes." HE Said, "Bring them hither to Me!" And He Commanded the Multitude to sit down on the grass, and Took the five loaves and the two fishes, and, Looking up to Heaven, He Blessed, and Brake, and Gave the loaves to His Disciples; and the Disciples to the Multitude. And they did All eat, and were filled: and they took up of the fragments, that remained, twelve baskets full. And they, that had eaten, were about five thousand Men, beside Women and Children.—15 to 21.

The Disciples themselves seem to have entertained, but by slow degrees, just and becoming notions of the Greatness and Power of their DIVINE

MASTER; repeatedly suggesting to Him Human difficulties, and without mixing with them any intimation or evincing any belief that He had more than Human ability to surmount them; or that All Things were Put in Subjection under Him. Amidst the Consciousness of His Omnipotence, how wonderful is it that He could Bear with the faithlessness, the infirmities, even of His Chosen Disciples; and still more, that He Restrained the Exercise of That Almighty Energy, Which might have Crushed every opposition to His Government, and Put down all iniquity! And yet His Power was only Exerted in Doing and Promoting Good.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And when the day was now far spent, His Disciples came unto Him, and said, "This is a desert Place, and now the time is far passed: Send them away, that they may go into the Country round about, and into the Villages, and buy themselves bread; for they have nothing to eat!" HE Answered, and Said unto them, "Give ye them to eat!" And they say unto Him, "Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat?" HE Saith unto them, "How many loaves have ye? go and see!" And when they knew, they say, "Five, and two fishes." And He Commanded them to make All sit down by Companies upon the green grass: and they sat down in ranks by hundreds and by fifties. And when He had Taken the five loaves and the two fishes, He Looked up to Heaven, and Blessed, and Brake the loaves and Gave them to His Disciples to set before them; and the two fishes Divided He among them all: and they did all eat and were filled. And they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments, and of the fishes. And they, that did eat of the loaves, were about five thousand Men.*—Chap. vi, 35 to 44.

The uniform Utterance of Blessing and Praise, before engaging in Meals, is a practical Lesson to All, upon all such occasions, whether we eat or drink, to do so with paying honour and acknowledging gratitude to GOD; from Whom the very food we have is derived, and the very faculty of enjoying it is obtained.

St. Luke's continuation is thus: *And when the day began to wear away, then came the Twelve and said unto Him, "Send the Multitude away, that they may go into the Towns and Country round about, and lodge and get victuals: for we are here in a desert Place." But He Said unto them, "Give ye them to eat!" And they said, "We have no more, but five loaves and two fishes; except we should go and buy meat for all this People." For they were about five thousand Men. And He Said to His Disciples, "Make them sit down by Fifties in a Company!" And they did so, and made them All sit down. Then He Took the five loaves and the two fishes, and Looking up to Heaven, He Blessed them, and Brake, and Gave to the Disciples to set before the Multitude: and they did eat, and were All filled; and there was taken up of fragments, that remained to them, twelve baskets.*—Chap. ix, 12 to 17.

St. John's statement is as follows: *After these things, JESUS Went over the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias. And a great Multitude followed Him, because they saw His Miracles, Which He did on them that were diseased. And JESUS Went up into a Mountain, and there He Sat with His Disciples: and the Passover, a Feast of the Jews, was nigh. When JESUS then Lifted up His Eyes, and Saw a great Company come unto Him, He Saith unto Philip, "Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" And this He Said to Prove him: for He Himself Knew What He would Do. Philip answered Him, "Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every One of them may take a little!" One of His Disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's Brother, saith unto Him, "There is a Lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so Many?" And JESUS Said, "Make the Men sit down!"*



*Now there was much grass in the Place: So the Men sat down in number about five thousand. And JESUS Took the loaves, and when He had Given Thanks, He distributed to the Disciples, and the Disciples to them, that were set down; and likewise of the fishes, as much as they would. When they were filled, He Said unto His Disciples, "Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost." Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them, that had eaten. Then those Men, when they had seen the Miracle, That JESUS Did, said, "This is of a truth That PROPHET, That should Come into the World."—Chap. vi, 1 to 14.*

The influence thus worked upon the minds of Some, should have operated upon All. But, alas! we shall see how soon, even upon the most Observant and Thoughtful, the effect subsided.

As has been before briefly observed, on every occasion of Sharing or Distributing the Bounty of PROVIDENCE, JESUS Seems Preliminarily to have Offered up Thanksgiving to The FOUNTAIN of Goodness, and to have thus Read, impressively, a Lesson to Mankind at large of the reasonableness, the propriety, and the necessity of first looking to The AUTHOR of our Blessings, ere we venture to indulge in them; and to acknowledge our just sense of His Benevolence in Supplying us both with the means of Sustenance, and the faculty of being gratified and refreshed in the receiving It, in the measure of temperance and sobriety.

△ And straightway JESUS Constrained His Disciples to get into a ship, and to go before Him unto the other side, while He Sent the Multitudes away. And when He had Sent the Multitudes away, He Went up into a Mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, He was there Alone.—22, 23.

The Exertion and Extent of Occupation, to which CHRIST was Exposed in His Public Ministry, seem neither to have unfitted nor Disinclined Him for the Offices of Private Devotion: and as in Him it was a Constant Practice to Pour forth His Soul in Confidence to His Heavenly FATHER, so should it be One, that nothing should deter us from imitating; since nothing can so fortify and refresh the Soul, or exalt it in its views of GOD'S Infinite Goodness and Mercy, either already experienced by us, or Graciously in Reserve for us, as the holding frequent and fervent communion, in all humility and earnestness of confession, and supplication, and thanksgiving, with The MOST HIGH, as The FOUNTAIN of Life, and The SOURCE of every real and permanent Blessing.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And straightway He (JESUS) Constrained His Disciples to get into the ship, and to go to the other side before, unto Bethsaida, while He Sent away the People. And when He had Sent them away, He Departed into a Mountain to Pray: and when even was come, the ship was in the midst of the Sea, and He Alone on the Land.*—Chap. vi, 45 to 47.

St. John gives here also an extended view of This Incident in our SAVIOUR'S Life, saying, *When JESUS, therefore, Perceived that they (the Multitude) would come and take Him by force, to make Him a King, He Departed again into a Mountain Himself Alone.*—Chap. vi, 15.

Regarded, as JESUS on this occasion, therefore seems to have been by the People, (who had witnessed Such a Miracle,) as The Expected MESSIAH, Who, they had been led to conclude, would Reign over them, and be as well their KING, as their PRIEST and PROPHET, it was natural in the warmly actuated feelings of their hearts, under such an expectation and such an experience, that they should proclaim Him and confess Him as The Coming Glory of His People Israel. But our SAVIOUR Knew that His Time was not yet Come,

in Which He should have That Character publicly Cast upon Him, and when would be sounded in the ears of countless Thousands, with direct allusion to Himself, that *Blessed is He, That Cometh in the Name of The LORD! Hosannahs to The HIGHEST!*

But the ship was now in the midst of the Sea, tossed with waves; for the wind was contrary: and in the fourth watch of the night, JESUS Went unto them, Walking on the Sea. And When the Disciples saw Him Walking on the Sea, they were troubled, saying, "It is a Spirit!" And they cried out for fear. But straightway JESUS Spake unto them, Saying, "Be of good cheer! It is I: be not afraid!"—24 to 27.

This Miracle of JESUS Walking on the Sea seems to have Worked more than any previous One on the minds of His Disciples, for, as will appear on reference to the 33rd verse, they, in consequence of it, came and *worshipped Him*, saying, "*Of a Truth Thou art The SON of GOD!*" which shews the weakness of Man's judgment, and how much more is it influenced by fear, than by love: for in This Act of our SAVIOUR no Display of Mercy was Mixed with the Act of Might, as had been the Case with almost All the previous Instances of CHRIST'S Miracles, in Exercise of The DIVINE Omnipotence within Him: although in Them was Super-Human Power in no degree less conspicuous, if a right conception had been formed of Them. To Heal the Sick, to Raise the Dead, to Cast out Devils, to Feed the Hungry without the visible means of doing so, to Still the waves of a troubled conscience, to Stay the fury of an evil Spirit, to Speak Peace to the Broken-hearted, were as admissible Proofs of A Present GOD, as "Moving on the face of the Waters:" yet These drew not forth equal adoration.

How discouraging to The Blessed JESUS, Who Gave Himself a Free-Will Offering for the Salvation of Mankind, must have been this timid, sluggish, and varying faith, even of His Own Disciples! Yet His Benevolence never Forsook Him; and, amidst all their abandonment or distrust of Him, He never Abandoned them; but either Strengthened His Exhortation towards their confidence in Him as The Sure ROCK of their Salvation; or Gently Chided them with a more than Brotherly Tenderness for the littleness of their faith.

St. Mark's continuation is thus: *And JESUS Saw the Disciples toiling in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them: and about the fourth watch of the night, He Cometh unto them, Walking upon the Sea; and would have Passed by them: but when they saw Him Walking upon the Sea, they supposed it had been a Spirit, and cried out: for they all saw Him, and were troubled. And immediately He Talked with them, and Saith unto them, "Be of good cheer! It is I: be not afraid!"*—Chap. vi, 48 to 50.

St. John's narrative thus proceeds: *And when even was now come, His Disciples went down unto the Sea, and entered into a ship, and went over the Sea toward Capernaum: and it was now dark; and JESUS was not Come to them: and the Sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew: so when they had rowed about five-and-twenty or thirty furlongs, they see JESUS Walking on the Sea, and Drawing nigh unto the ship: and they were afraid. But He Saith unto them, "It is I: be not afraid!"*—Chap vi, 16 to 20.

The holy Job, in his description of The ALMIGHTY, saith, that *GOD is He, That Treadeth upon the waves of the Sea.*—Chap. ix, 8. And by This Act of Omnipotence did JESUS, in a degree, Manifest His Participation in The GODHEAD.

△ And Peter answered Him, and said, "LORD, if it be Thou, Bid me come unto Thee on the water!" And He Said, "Come!" And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to JESUS. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and, beginning to sink, he cried, saying, "LORD, Save me!" And immediately JESUS Stretched forth His Hand, and Caught him, and Said unto him, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased. Then they, that were in the ship, came and worshipped Him, saying, "Of a Truth Thou art The SON of GOD!"—28 to 33.

What a proof of Human Character, even in its best estate, and under the most supporting circumstances, does this conduct of St. Peter display: forward in zeal, and warm in affectionate attachment towards his acknowledged LORD and MASTER, he places himself in situations, where Human power and help are vain, without having fortified his Soul by previous prayer to withstand the temptations and trials that might beset him: and discovers, when too late, that the faith, he possessed, was not rooted and reared in his heart. For why should he have been afraid to die, since his SAVIOUR was Nigh? and, though the Waters might have overwhelmed his body, yet would his Soul, in that instant, have risen to the Glories of That State, Which awaits the Redeemed, who die in the faith of JESUS. Why was he not content with That Salvation, Which he ought not to have doubted The SON of GOD would have at once Poured upon his Soul? But amidst our surprise at the unstableness of Peter's reliance on the never-failing Help of GOD to them, who devoutly seek Him, let us not presume on the consistency of our own faith, but accompany every movement of our Souls with inward prayer and supplication, that we may have that Spirit of Grace within us, which may sustain and guide and guard us in every time of need; and that we may rest our confidence in It, and not in our own strength; lest, thinking we stand, we find ourselves falling from the want of an enduring and ever-present faith in Him, in Whom Alone is Salvation.

Had JESUS not been A MINISTER of Mercy, as well as of Power, He might, by Suffering St. Peter to sink, in proof of the helplessness of Man without faith in GOD, have Impressed the other Disciples and Beholders of the occurrence with a conviction of the danger of making shipwreck of faith, and of letting go a dependance on the Word of GOD. But He Came not to Destroy, but to Save; and Inviteth All to come unto Him, Promising Freely Spiritual Help, and to Save their Souls alive, if in a lively faith they so come to Him.

The SON of GOD had been the Predicted Character of The MESSIAH; and by That Denomination must the Israelites indeed have expected to hail Him: "*THOU art MY SON; This Day have I Begotten Thee!*" was the Language of The HOLY SPIRIT, when Speaking through the Royal Psalmist. [Ps. ii, 7.] And to the truth of this, the very Devils bore testimony; for on being Expelled at CHRIST'S Mandate from Persons, whom they had possessed, they cried out, saying, "*THOU art CHRIST, The SON of GOD!*"—Luke iv, 41.

St. Mark's continued narrative is thus: *And JESUS Went up unto the Disciples into the ship; and the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered: for they considered not the Miracle of the loaves; for their heart was hardened.*—Chap. vi, 51, 52.

The heart should early and continually be trained to receive, with gladness and thankfulness, Impressions of The DIVINE Presence and Favour. But, alas! if yielding only to its own natural impulses, how sadly and, oftentime, desperately wicked does it become! Miracle succeeding Miracle! yet how faint the impression even upon those professing most attachment and devotedness to The MESSIAH'S PERSON!

St. John states, *Then the Disciples willingly received JESUS into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the Land, whither they went.*—Chap. vi, 21.

St. Peter called in his distress to Him, from Whom Alone cometh Help : but St. Paul, with a less wavering faith, exemplified what it is to trust in The SON of GOD, when exultingly and triumphantly he said, *I can do all things through CHRIST, Which Strengtheneth me.*—Phil. iv, 13.

O LORD, Thou Drewest Near in the day that I called upon Thee! Thou Saidest, “Fear not!” Such were the confiding and consoling utterings of the Prophet Jeremiah amidst his Lamentations, Chap. iii, 57. And such may be the trust and the assurance of every Christian heart, whatever measure of difficulty or danger in temporal matters may assail it.

St. James, who most probably was, at the time, an Eye Witness of St. Peter's forwardness and faithlessness, thence founded, perhaps, his admonition, in his general Epistle, and which applies equally to all after Ages, saying, *Ask in faith, nothing wavering!*—Chap. i, 6.

The description of a Sea storm, and of The DIVINE Influence over it, so often Exercised in Mercy at the supplication of those, who ask in faith, is thus vividly given by the Royal Psalmist: *They that go down to the Sea in ships, that do business in great Waters; these see the Works of The LORD, and His Wonders in the Deep: for He Commandeth and Raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof; they mount up to the Heaven, they go down again to the Depths: their Soul is melted because of trouble: they reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken Man, and are at their wit's end. Then they cry unto The LORD in their trouble: and He Bringeth them out of their distress: He Maketh the storm a calm; so that the waves thereof are still! Then are they glad, because they be quiet: so He Bringeth them unto their desired Haven!* And thus does the same Gifted Writer bespeak the flow of gratitude to GOD for Such and All His Miracles: *Oh that Men would praise The LORD for His Goodness, and for His Wonderful Works to the Children of Men! Let them exalt Him also in the Congregation of the People, and praise Him in the Assembly of the Elders!*—Ps. cvii, 23 to 32.

St. Peter's faith was ever forward in profession, though but too often wavered, when practically put to the test: as when CHRIST Spoke more plainly of Himself and of His Union with The FATHER and The GODHEAD, Which led Many of His Hearers to leave and go no more after Him: and when He Asked His immediate Disciples, “Will ye also go away?” *Simon Peter thus answered Him, “LORD, to whom shall we go? THOU hast the Words of Eternal Life: and we believe and are sure that Thou art That CHRIST, The SON of The Living GOD.”*—John vi, 66 to 69.

Faith in CHRIST, as The SON of GOD, is essential to any hope of Salvation, and the initiatory sacrifice of Baptism is founded on such admission, as was insisted by the Apostle Philip in his conference with the pious and courtly Eunuch of Ethiopia, whom Philip thus addressed: “*If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest be baptized.*” And he answered, and said, “*I believe that JESUS CHRIST is The SON of GOD.*”—Acts viii, 37.

St. Paul, though acknowledging JESUS CHRIST to have been of the Seed of David according to the Flesh, yet declares Him to be The SON of GOD with Power, according to The SPIRIT of Holiness.—Rom. i, 3, 4.

And when they were gone over, they came into the Land of Gennesaret. And when the Men of that Place had knowledge of Him, they sent out into all that Country round about; and brought unto Him All, that were diseased; and besought Him, that they might only touch the hem of His Garment; and as Many as touched were Made perfectly Whole.—34 to 36.

O that there were an equal desire to touch, in this our day, the Hem of

CHRIST'S Spiritual Garment, and to seek out Him, as the True and Only PHYSICIAN of Souls! For who is there among us, that is not spotted within and without, even as a Leper, with sin; or that is not lame or blind or sick even unto death, with the pollutions of this World: and though CHRIST Invites us All to come unto Him, that we may be Healed, and The HOLY SPIRIT Strives to Work in us a will to be so Purified; yet how tardy are we in coming, and how little mindful of Such Inestimable Help so Continually and Graciously Pressed upon us! But however ready to censure Peter for the littleness of his faith, how little do we strive to confirm and strengthen our own; though the fulness of faith, which is attainable by All, who rightly cherish it, would bring us the full assurance of Salvation. For Many of us have the form of Godliness without the power thereof, calling upon the Name of The LORD with our lips, yet our hearts, how seldom are they near Him with the reverence and holy love that they should be, for the never-ceasing Benefits Conferred by Him on us! CHRIST is still Waiting to be Gracious; and is as Willing and as Able now to Give the needed Medicine for our Souls, as when on Earth He was to Administer the Balm of Healing to the Bodies of the Faithful.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And when they had passed over, they came into the Land of Gennesaret, and drew to the Shore: and when they were come out of the ship, straightway they knew Him; and ran through that whole Region round about, and began to carry about in beds those, that were sick, where they heard He was; and whithersoever He Entered into Villages, or Cities, or Country, they laid the Sick in the Streets, and besought Him that they might touch, if it were but the border of His Garment: and as Many as touched Him were Made Whole.*—Chap. vi, 53 to 56.

All, who touched Him, seem to have drawn Healing Virtue out of Him; [Luke vi, 19.] but they did it for bodily comfort. We may draw from Him That Unction for the Soul, Which Alone can Enable it to stand upright in the Presence of GOD; and to bear a Wedding Garment at the Marriage Feast of CHRIST and His Spouse, the Church of the true Israelites of GOD.

St. Paul, the faithful Servant of so Loving and Gracious A LORD and MASTER, shared so largely of That Unction from The HOLY ONE, that GOD Wrought Special Miracles by his hands; so that from his body were brought unto the Sick handkerchiefs or aprons; and the diseases departed from them, and the evil Spirits went out of them.—Acts xix, 11, 12. But he did not thence lay claim to DIVINITY, but attributed all his powers to the Grace and Goodness of JESUS, as The SON of GOD.

△ CHAP. XV.—Then came to JESUS Scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying, "Why do Thy Disciples transgress the tradition of the Elders: for they wash not their hands, when they eat bread!"—1, 2.

How restless and indefatigable in their jealousy and envy these Scribes and Pharisees seem to have been! aiming ever at opposing the Power and confounding the Doctrine of Him, Who Came to Bring Life and Immortality to Light!! they gave not their minds to the calm and sober consideration, whether Such Ministry and Messages were from GOD: but at once, because They militated against the prejudices and false but cherished doctrine of the Elders, gave way to the base spirit of persecution, and set themselves to work evil in the Sight of A Present GOD, though they professed only to serve The GOD of their adoration. St. Matthew does not enter into the particular of the tradition, but St. Mark thus describes it: *The Pharisees and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the Elders: and when they come from*

*the Market, except they wash, they eat not: and many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups and pots, brassen vessels, and of tables.*—Chap. vii, 3, 4. That cleanliness contributes to comfort and to health is probable, and where there are leisure and opportunity to indulge in it in moderation, that it may be made conducive to the purity of the Soul as a symbol or example, may be admitted; but that it is essential to Godliness can hardly be allowed, since, if it were so, what would be the condition of the majority of Mankind, who, from the nature of their labour and occupation, are denied its possession. But if cleanliness of person be the highest aim of our notions of purity; if the Soul be neglected or defiled, then indeed is our attention to the appearance of the Body altogether unprofitable in any Spiritual point of view; if not actually criminal, should we, from the enjoyment of it and desire at every sacrifice to preserve it, shun the lowly house and habitation of Poverty and Sickness and Want and Suffering, lest the Inmates thereof might contaminate us by the touch of their uncleanness.

The full narrative of St. Mark is thus: *Then came together unto JESUS the Pharisees, and Certain of the Scribes, which came from Jerusalem: and when they saw Some of His Disciples eat bread with defiled, that is to say, with unwashen hands, they found fault.* [See the two following verses transcribed above.] *Then the Pharisees and Scribes asked Him, "Why walk not Thy Disciples according to the tradition of the Elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands?"*—Chap. vii, 1, 2, 5.

The same spirit of mistaken faith in traditionary doctrine continued to obtain in the Apostolic time; for St. Paul thus admonished the Colossian Converts: *Beware lest any Man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of Men, after the rudiments of the World; and not after CHRIST!*—Colos. ii, 8. Amongst the Jews Tradition had so fast a hold amidst the ceremonial ritual of their Law, that distinctions were confounded, and the outward observance of them was considered as paramount to that inward government of the heart and Life, which could alone be Pleasing in the Sight of GOD.

But He Answered, and Said unto them, "Why do ye also transgress the Commandment of GOD by your tradition? For GOD Commanded, Saying, 'Honour thy Father and Mother! and he, that curseth Father or Mother, let him die the death!' But ye say, 'Whosoever shall say to his Father or his Mother, 'It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me: and honour not his Father or his Mother, he shall be free.' Thus have ye made the Commandment of GOD of none effect, by your tradition."—3 to 6.

With their own weapons did CHRIST Combat these Enemies of Righteousness and Holiness of Heart and Life. They had brought forward, in the assumed importance of ceremonial observance, and in the tauntingness of Spiritual pride and Self-sufficiency, the tradition of their Elders as a ground-work of accusation against the faithful and devout Followers of The SON of GOD, and who had obviously been made Partakers of The DIVINE Influence of working Miracles in the Name and for the Honour of CHRIST: and the only offence that, with all the furious zeal of Hatred and Jealousy could be sought out wherewith to charge them, was the having omitted or slightly regarded the custom of frequent ablutions prevailing fastidiously amongst the Jewish Rabbies or Priests. To what miserable shifts are they reduced, who set up the idols of their own imaginations against the pure and holy Word and worship of The All-Wise and Omniscient GOD! CHRIST justly Demanded of them, why they, who professed to be such rigid Advocates for the observance of traditionary rules, which had their origin in the perverting reasoning of vain-glorious Man, assuming them, at the

same time, to be in accordance with the peculiarly Revealed Will of GOD, did overlook the clear and manifest Tendency of the Public and universally diffused Law of The MOST HIGH, as Given even in the Commandments? and that, instead of sacredly observing, both in the spirit and in the letter, That Law of their Acknowledged LORD, Which Enjoined reverence and filial honour to Parents, (and Which, as St. Paul says, was the first Commandment with Promise,) they should seek to narrow It, and to stifle Its heart-softening Influence by besetting exceptions to Its application, By so doing, they suffered their Lives to be swayed to one (doubtless amongst many others) glaring instance of direct violation of The DIVINE Law: thus preferring Human ordinances (which at the best are liable to much doubt and uncertainty,) to What indisputably and admissively GOD Himself Ordained: for the Fifth Commandment was thus virtually denied to be The Word of GOD by these Pharisees: since, instead of honouring their Parents, and abstaining from any unjust or ungenerous dealing or behaviour towards them, this tradition justified and encouraged them to throw off the Parental yoke, and unmindful of the infinite obligation a Child is laid under to a tender Father and a nursing Mother, to consider that obligation as discharged; and, on the contrary, the Parent to owe the Child an overwhelming debt of gratitude, when, amidst the changes and chances of this transitory Life, the Parent needed and obtained assistance from the Child; and which sickness, infirmity, or other occurrence in a lengthened course of years, might render necessary.

St. Mark's Account of this conference, describes the effect of this tradition as even still more unnatural and hostile to The DIVINE Decree: *And JESUS Said unto them, "Full well ye reject the Commandment of GOD, that ye may keep your own tradition; for Moses said, 'Honour thy Father and thy Mother!' and 'Whoso curseth Father or Mother, let him die the death!' [Exod. xx, 12, xxi, 17.] But ye say, 'If a Man shall say to his Father or Mother, 'It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me, he shall be free:' and ye suffer him no more to do aught for his Father or his Mother: making the Word of GOD of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered; and many such like things do ye."*—Chap. vii, 9 to 13.

*Ye shall fear every Man his Mother and his Father!* was expressly part of the Levitical Law, as directly Emanating from The Word of GOD. [Levit. xix, 3.] And amongst the Heaven-Prompted Admonitions of Solomon is the following: *Hearken unto thy Father, that begat thee! and despise not thy Mother, when she is old!* [Prov. xxiii, 22.] St. Paul enjoins even the sharpness of rebuke in order to preserve professing Christians in the soundness of faith, that they may not give heed to Jewish fables and commandments of Men, that turn from the Truth.—Titus i, 13, 14.

△ "Ye Hypocrites! well did Esaias Prophecy of you, [xxix, 13.] saying, 'This People draweth nigh unto Me with their mouth, and honoureth Me with their lips; but their heart is far from Me!' But in vain they do worship Me, teaching for Doctrines the commandments of Men."—7 to 9.

CHRIST, Who from His Union with The GODHEAD, as CREATOR of Man, Knew what was in Man, Knew that hypocrisy lurked in the hearts of these seemly zealous Advocates for the faith; and boldly Accused them of that hateful and hated vice, at the peril of incurring their more rancorous rage and malice.

The Passage in Isaiah here briefly referred to, as characteristic of that hypocrisy, which before awakened the Jealousy of JEHOVAH, is thus in the Denunciation itself: *The LORD Said, "Forasmuch as this People draw near Me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour Me, but have removed their heart*

far from Me, and their fear toward Me is taught by the precept of Men; therefore, behold, I will Proceed to Do a Marvellous Work amongst this People, even a Marvellous Work and a Wonder: for the wisdom of their wise Men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent Men shall be hid."—Chap. xxix, 13, 14.

St. Mark's narrative is: *JESUS Answered, and Said unto the Pharisees and Scribes, "Well hath Esaias Prophetised of you, Hypocrites! as it is Written, 'This People honoureth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me.' Howbeit, in vain do they worship Me, teaching for Doctrines the commandments of Men! For laying aside the Commandment of GOD, ye hold the tradition of Men, as the washing of pots and cups; and many other such like things ye do." And He Said unto Them, "Full well ye reject the Commandment of GOD, that ye may keep your own tradition."*—Chap. vii, 6 to 9.

To make The DIVINE Law a dead letter, because the usages of Society urge the doing so, and this even under a profession of religious observance, and an indignant jealousy of being accused of hypocrisy, is more prevalent in Society than is generally suspected: and, perhaps, prevails more in our own habits than we are disposed to acknowledge, or have the suspicion of even in our own minds. May we, therefore, guard well the heart, as out of it are the issues of Life; and may we seek, by fervent prayer, to have it ever Guided by the Word of GOD!

And He Called the Multitude, and Said unto them, "Hear and understand! Not that, which goeth into the mouth, defileth a Man: but that, which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a Man."—10, 11.

Our SAVIOUR did not, by this general Position, Mean to Give any Sanction to intemperance, in the use of the good things of this Life, (for, indeed, nothing more frequently induces to the issue of defiling words and filthy conversation from the mouth, than suffering to pass into it the cravings of the Gluttonous and the Winebibber,) it is in the abuse of such Natural gifts that the criminality lies. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh: and when jealousies and envyings and evil surmisings, and every hateful and ungenerous passion are harboured and encouraged in the heart, then must it be that the mouth uttereth violence and offensiveness, unless it restrain itself under the influence of hypocrisy and deceitfulness to gain more readily its baneful end. But short-sighted Man considereth not that there is ONE, Who Looketh upon the heart, and Knoweth all things; and that upon every thought of the heart of Man He will Pass a Righteous Judgment, whether it be good or evil! Neglect of personal cleanliness is wrong in a physical point of view, and in a moral one it is unneighbourly, as it is likely to impair the Individual's health, and may communicate infectious disease. But the cleansing and purifying the heart, and by deep sorrow and contrition for its past state of neglect and pollution, to obtain, by prayer put forth in faith and in fervency, its being Washed and Regenerated in the Blood of CHRIST, as The Sacrificial LAMB, should be the persevering object of every One of us: and then, though the outward Person may be slighted by the World, the inner Man will be Approved of GOD.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And when JESUS had Called all the People unto Him, He Said unto them, "Hearken unto Me Every One of you, and understand! There is nothing from without a Man, that, entering into him, can defile him: but the things, which come out of him, those are they that defile a Man. If any Man have ears to hear, let him hear!"*—Chap. vii, 14 to 16.

*Unto the Pure all things are pure: but unto them, that are defiled and unbelieving, is nothing pure: but even their mind and conscience is defiled: they profess that they know GOD; but in works they deny Him.*—Titus i, 15, 16.



△ Then came His Disciples, and said unto Him, "Knowest Thou that the Pharisees were offended after they heard This Saying? But He Answered, and Said, "Every Plant, which My HEAVENLY FATHER hath not Planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone! they be blind Leaders of the Blind. And if the Blind lead the Blind, Both shall fall into the ditch."—12 to 14.


Though confounded by the force of CHRIST'S Reasoning, these Self-opiniated Pharisees still adhered to their hollow and hypocritical principles; though they dared not further to oppose Him by open argument: yet infatuatedly and obstinately determined not to yield confession to a Wisdom, they could not gainsay; and still clinging to the prejudices that possessed their minds, and which a long course of Spiritual pride had wound round their hearts, they refused to walk in That Light Which then Shone around them, and Which would have Led them from the errors of Darkness to the paths of Pleasantness and Peace through Faith and obedience unto true Holiness. So deeply rooted was this prejudice, that it entirely quenched in them the Light of The HOLY SPIRIT, and extinguished that Life of GOD in their Souls, which, if retained and cherished, would have induced them to receive the Tidings of Salvation with gladness, and to have hailed with becoming gratitude Him, Who Came from The FATHER of Spirits to Bring Life and Immortality to Light. How awful is it to contemplate the possibility of being Fashioned and Sustained by the Hand and Providence of GOD, yet without being a Plant of His Adoption, and, therefore, without the power of flourishing in His Courts, or being Received into Paradise! Yet this must be the wretched lot of All, who, from the uncleanness and defilement of their hearts and minds, and from the obstinacy of their unbelief and Self-conceit, are Forsaken of GOD, and left to perish (all Means of Salvation failing them) in the wilderness of sin. And how doubly charged with wretchedness and bitterness of woe must their portion be, who not only blinded themselves by self-will or sensuality or spiritual pride, but who misled Others from the ways of Truth and Soberness and Holiness of Life! To be Forsaken of Him, with Whom are the Issues of Life and Death, even in the Life that is, and to be Rejected of Him in That Day, when He shall Come, in All The MAJESTY of HEAVEN, to Judge both the Quick and the Dead, is of all miseries, that the folly and vices of Man can heap upon himself, immeasurably the greatest; and so, on that Truth-inspiring Day, he will be foremost to confess, and that in all the fulness of Self-condemnation and despair.

The Power of GOD Worketh in Man by faith in CHRIST, and the Soul of Man, thence Sanctified by the Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT Imparted to it, as a Further Free-Gift from The GIVER of All Goodness, brings forth the fruits of The SPIRIT in all reverence for and devotedness to the Revealed Word and Will of GOD. Without Both These DIVINE Assistances Man is altogether in a Spiritual sense, as affects both himself and Others, unprofitable and utterly unworthy of a place in the Garden of the Paradise of GOD!

Obstinate and headstrong and inflexible alike to right reason and true Religion, no hope presented itself of Effectuating the conversion of these proud Pharisees; CHRIST, therefore, Knowing as much, Left them to themselves, that His Labours might be elsewhere more usefully Employed. It was the blindness of infatuation and of Self-corrupted hearts, not that of ignorance and unintentional offence: and these are the most difficult to eradicate from the Human Soul. Those too, who flattered their weakness and their vanity, by listening to and encouraging these Advocates of evil, were as deservedly left to their own unhallowed imaginations, from the indulgence of which CHRIST Knew it was equally vain to Attempt to divert them: for, as said the Prophet Isaiah, and as may, with equal propriety, be said of these Pharisees and their Supporters, *The People turn not unto Him, That Smiteth them; neither do they seek The LORD of*

*Hosts: therefore The LORD will Cut off from Israel Head and Tail, Branch and Rush in one day, for the Leaders of this People cause them to err; and they, that are led of them, are destroyed.—Isa. ix, 13, 14. 16. “And now, O ye Priests, (Saith The LORD, by the mouth of His Prophet Malachi,) This Commandment is for you; If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give Glory unto My Name, Saith The LORD of HOSTS, I will even Send a Curse upon you, and I will Curse your blessings: yea, I have Cursed them already: because ye do not lay it to heart. For the Priests lips should keep knowledge; and they should seek the Law at his mouth; for he is the Messenger of The LORD of HOSTS. But ye are departed out of the Way; ye have caused Many to stumble at the Law: ye have corrupted the Covenant of Levi, Saith The LORD of HOSTS: for My Covenant was with him of Life and Peace; and I Gave Them to him for the fear, wherewith he (then) feared Me, and was afraid before My Name. The Law of Truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with Me in peace and equity; and did turn Many away from iniquity.”—Chap. ii, 1, 2, 7, 8, 5, 6.*

According to St. Luke it should seem that our SAVIOUR, on another occasion, Reasoned in the same Way, when Speaking as in a Parable unto His Disciples He Said, “*Can the Blind lead the Blind? Shall they not Both fall into the ditch?*”—Chap. vi, 39.

Then answered Peter, and said unto Him, “*Declare unto us this Parable!*” And JESUS  Said, “*Are ye also yet without understanding? Do not ye yet understand that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth, goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught? But those things, which proceed out of the mouth, come forth from the heart: and they defile the Man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. These are the things which defile a Man! But to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a Man.*”—15 to 20.

The simplicity or diffidence of mind in the Apostle in not venturing even an opinion on the almost obvious tendency and meaning of CHRIST'S Arguments, in confutation of the Pharisaic preference for the traditions of Men over the Express Commands of GOD, but in at once seeking the Exposition from The Oracle of Truth and Wisdom, JESUS CHRIST Himself, is a proof of that willing teachableness of heart, which at once draws down the Counsel of The MOST HIGH, in the Light and Guidance of His HOLY SPIRIT. And thus is exemplified the assurance and encouragement given by St. Paul to the humble and lowly in heart and mind, where, in his opening Epistle to the Corinthians, he writes, *GOD hath Chosen the foolish things of the World to confound the wise, and the weak things of the World, to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the World, and things which are despised, hath GOD Chosen; yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are; that no Flesh should glory in His Presence.*—1 Cor. i, 27 to 29. CHRIST did not Discourage His Disciples from exercising their understandings in reflections on the nature and effect of His Discourses, whether Delivered in Parables or otherwise; and His Expression of Surprise at their not understanding, what on His Expostulation with the Pharisees He had Uttered, is a Proof of this.

To call for the continual purification of the hands, whilst the heart is uncleansed from its defilements, is to offer tithe of herbs, and to neglect all the weighty things of The DIVINE Law. With the natural propensity to evil, which exists but too universally in the hearts of all Mankind in a greater or less degree, the paramount object of every professing Teacher of Truth and Holiness should be, to seek to set the heart right with its GOD. It was not that these

Pharisees, had they, above all things, consulted the Scriptures of DIVINE Truth, could have been ignorant of where the evil in Man's disposition and habits lay. It was by the mouth of their acknowledged Law-Giver under DIVINE Direction and Authority, that *the imagination of Man's heart* was declared to be *evil from its youth* [Gen. viii, 21]: and because *the wickedness of Man was great in the Earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually* [Chap. vi, 5], that the Floodgates of DIVINE Wrath were so awfully let loose upon Earth. Solomon too, who, of all Mankind, seemed most to know what was in Man, declared, in effect, that the heart of Man is a well of evil, and the mouth of him the channel for the putrid waters thereof. May we guard well our mouths, as the channel of evil or of good; and may we, with even more watchfulness, regulate the imaginations and thoughts of the heart; and, as any thought or desire arises within us, let us instantly weigh well its tendency, and consider whether it contain within it the seeds of evil or of good! and if the former, may we dismiss it instantly and perseveringly, as we would do the most obnoxious thing in Nature! since, to cherish it, may ultimately give it an influence over us in time, which we neither intended nor suspected; and finally exclude us from the pure and hallowed Intercourse with Heaven.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And when JESUS was Entered into the house from the People, His Disciples asked Him concerning the Parable. And He Saith unto them, "Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the Man, it cannot defile him; because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats?" And He Said, "That which cometh out of the Man, that defileth the Man: for from within, out of the heart of Men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: all these evil things come from within, and defile the Man."*—Chap. vii, 17 to 23.

On another occasion, as related by St. Luke, our SAVIOUR Said, "*A good Man, out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil Man, out of the evil treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is evil; for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.*"—Chap. vi, 45.

△ Then JESUS Went thence, and Departed into the Coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And, behold, a Woman of Canaan came out of the same Coasts, and cried unto Him, saying, "Have Mercy on me, O LORD, Thou Son of David, my Daughter is grievously vexed with a Devil!" But He Answered her not a word. And His Disciples came and besought Him, saying, "Send her away! for she crieth after us." But He Answered, and Said, "I am not Sent but unto the lost Sheep of the House of Israel." Then came she and worshipped Him, saying, "LORD, Help me!" But He Answered, and Said, "It is not meet to Take the Children's Bread, and to Cast It to dogs!" And she said, "Truth, LORD! yet the dogs eat of the crumbs, which fall from their Master's table." Then JESUS Answered, and Said unto her, "O Woman, great is thy faith! Be it unto thee even as thou wilt!" And her Daughter was Made Whole from that very hour.—21 to 28.

Maternal feeling and fondness might in any Woman have prompted the first application to JESUS; but a devotional heart, such as is necessary to prepare the way for the advent of faith, was indispensable as a support to a perseverance in supplication after so much Discouragement as that, with which the Canaanitish Woman's petition was Met; first, by a seemingly Studied Inattention, and secondly, by the most humiliating of Comparisons: Both, however, Resorted to by our SAVIOUR, Who Knew what was passing in her heart, and the strength of her faith, that by Exercising the latter, the meekness of the former might be made

manifest; and might influence by the power of example, the faith and practice of some, at least, of those around her. The style of her address to The SAVIOUR hewed evidently a cultivated mind, and makes it probable that she had read with attention the Hebrew Scriptures; for she said not unto Him, as might have been expected from an Alien to the commonwealth of Israel: "Sir," or "Master," but, "O LORD, Thou Son of David!" thus at once proclaiming with all the accuracy of Scriptural knowledge and Prophetic research, both His DIVINE and Human Descent. The Fame of JESUS may, indeed, have led her to compare Such A Character with the Prophetic Representation of The MESSIAH, and the pregnant proof of DIVINE Power in the Dispossession of evil spirits, offering, as it did, the last hope of a fond Mother, might have first prompted her applying to Him; but such persevering intercession, so originating, and so directed with such humility and such pious reverence, could only have been manifested by a heart influenced by vital faith.

The reverence paid to CHRIST by His Disciples is here strongly observable: though themselves offended by the Woman's importunity, and, concluding that our SAVIOUR did not Hear her, by His not Noticing or Answering what he said, they did not, of their own accord, assume to send her away; but submitted the matter for their LORD and MASTER'S Decision.

The Israel of GOD is the hearts of the Faithful, whether Jews or Gentiles, Barbarians, Bond or Free: for He is no Respector of Persons; but whosoever loveth CHRIST, and keepeth His Commandments, the Same is His Brother, or Sister or Mother: neither is The LORD'S House a House made with hands, but the Temple of The HOLY GHOST is the Souls of His Saints, whether within the bounds of the temporal Zion or without them. Such, it is submitted, may have been the spirit of This Speech of our SAVIOUR, though It was either more literally understood by the Woman herself; or she was pre-eminently Gifted with the Christian virtue of Humility, as well as with that of Faith. St. Paul, though himself a Jew, and versed in all the science of Jewish privileges by his readings in the Law, and by his Prophetic view of the Gospel, left this memorable record for the consolation of the Gentiles of the Faith in all Ages, *He is not Jew, which is one Outwardly, neither is that Circumcision, which is outward in the flesh; but he is Jew, which is One inwardly; and Circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter.*—Rom. ii, 28, 29.

The act of adoration after such a seeming Repulse from Him, Whom she had been led to regard as The GOD of all Mercy, as well as of all Power, was the result of that most truly Christian feeling, a sense of her own unworthiness and of her hope resting in the boundless Love of CHRIST, if sought with a lowly, contrite, and obedient heart: and she thus equally acknowledged her faith in His Power, as her hope in His Mercy. And our SAVIOUR Full Well knew how great was that faith, and how justifiable that hope in this humble but earnest Suppliant; His Adoption, therefore, of Language seemingly so disheartening must have been, not to turn away her face from Him, but to shame the nominal Israelites around Him, and Others to the end of time, by a comparison of this Woman's persevering devotion to Him, with their indifference, neglect, faithlessness, and even contempt. In her reply, the same becoming one of humiliation, the same pious acknowledgment of CHRIST'S DIVINITY, were preserved, and the most modest suggestion that by possibility could be offered, was made in return. She does not even offer the gentlest remonstrance to the Comparison Made; but even adopts It, and follows It up with the most raise-worthy submission and continuance in prayer. She seeks not to be received amongst the chief Chosen of The MESSIAH, but offers the tribute of her deepest gratitude, should she but be Admitted to partake of the least Overflow

of DIVINE Love. And thus was demonstrated a confirmation of the efficacy, and only sufficient efficacy of Faith; of GOD'S Ready Extension of His Benevolence to All, who come unto Him in faith; and of the Power of CHRIST in Working the Miracle of Casting out a Devil by the mere Utterance of His Word, though in His Human State as Man, He was at such a distance from the Object of His Healing Influence; being, perhaps, even in a different Country, as the Woman was of Syrophenicia. Thus was it obvious that by the House of Israel was not Meant, in The DIVINE Mind, the mere local limits of Judea; but that All of Human Kind, who in the lowly habit of humility and piety have, therefore, Cast on them by A GOD of Discernment, and Who is everywhere Present, the Wedding Garment of Faith, will be Welcomed, by A GOD of Mercy, to a full Measure of the Bread and Water of Eternal Life. Let it, however, be borne in mind, that as true Faith is ever preceded by Humility, so is it invariably and inseparably attended and followed by obedience to GOD'S Word of Commandment, both with heart and with hand, in spirit and in truth: the Woman believed our SAVIOUR'S Word; and went on her way rejoicing.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And from thence JESUS Arose, and Went into the Borders of Tyre and Sidon, and Entered into an house; and would have no Man know it; but He could not be Hid: for a certain Woman, whose young Daughter had an unclean Spirit, heard of Him, and came and fell at His Feet: the Woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by Nation: and she besought Him that He would Cast forth the Devil out of her Daughter. But JESUS Said unto her, "Let the Children first be filled! for it is not meet to Take the Children's bread, and to Cast it unto the dogs." And she answered, and said unto Him, "Yea, LORD! yet the dogs under the table eat of the Children's crumbs." And He Said unto her, "For this saying, go thy way! the Devil is gone out of thy Daughter." And when she was come to her house, she found the Devil gone out, and her Daughter laid upon the bed.*—Chap. vii, 24 to 30.

See the observations on Chapter x, 5, 6.

See also those on Chapter vii, 6.

St. Paul and Barnabas, when expostulating with a Body of faithless Hebrews at Antioch, said, *It was necessary that the Word of GOD should first have been spoken to you: but, seeing ye put It from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of Everlasting Life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles: for so hath The LORD Commanded us, Saying, [in Isa. xlix, 6.] "I have Set Thee (The MESSIAH) to be a Light of the Gentiles: that Thou shouldest be for Salvation unto the Ends of the Earth."*—Acts xiii, 46, 47.

The faith of Job was even more exemplary than that of this suppliant Mother; for amidst his total loss of Children and other unparalleled privations, he exclaimed, *though The LORD Slay me, yet will I trust in Him: He also shall be my Salvation: I will maintain mine own ways before Him; for an Hypocrite shall not come before Him.*—Chap. xiii, 15, 16. And to the Faithful the same spirit of consolation may arise, as was experienced by the Prophet Jeremiah amidst his Lamentations thus expressed: *The LORD will not Cast off for ever: but though He Cause grief, yet will He Have Compassion according to the Multitude of His Mercies.*—Chap. iii, 31, 32. May we also remember with the Psalmist of Israel, that *The LORD is Nigh unto all Them, that call upon Him; to All, that call upon Him in truth: and that He will Fulfil the desire of Them, that fear Him: that He will Hear their cry; and will Save them.*—Ps. cxlv, 18, 19.

And JESUS Departed from thence, and Came nigh unto the Sea of Galilee; and Went up into a Mountain, and Sat down there. And great Multitudes came unto Him, having with them Those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many Others, and cast them down at JESUS' Feet; and He Healed them: insomuch that the Multitude wondered when they saw the Dumb to speak, the Maimed to be whole, the Lame to walk, and the Blind to see: and they glorified The GOD of Israel.—29 to 31. △

How might This Miracle be every day in spirit Performed, if All, who labour under Spiritual infirmities, (and who has not some portion of them?) and which are much more hurtful in their immediate, and fatal in their remote, effects, than bodily diseases, would feel and acknowledge the need of being relieved of them, and would, with contrite and faithful hearts, seek unto JESUS, as The Great PHYSICIAN of Souls, to Pour His Healing Unction over them! And how valuable above all other offices of Friendship or Charity, in Those, who have faith in themselves, and experience of the Efficacy of CHRIST'S Mediation for the Cure of Souls, is their labouring to bring Others within the Same Pale of Salvation! And who, Spiritually speaking, can be more distressingly dumb than they, who never call on GOD'S Holy Name, at least with reverence and holy love? Who more maimed than they, who never walked to the House of GOD in prayerful spirit, or raised their hands in penitence and supplication to the Throne of Grace, or extended those hands in acts of charity and Brotherly love to their suffering and supplicating Fellow-Creatures? Who more lame than they, who have walked only in the broad way that leadeth to destruction; and are Strangers to those paths of Pleasantness and Peace, which Religion opens to Believers? And who more blind, than Such as see not Spiritual things; but view all things through an eye of flesh, and suffer themselves to be veiled in Spiritual darkness by the pleasures and cares of this transitory State, regardless of the precipice of everlasting misery, on the brink of which they are treading? And, alas! how large is the proportion of Mankind, to whom the Light of Revelation hath been Extended, and to whom the Offer of a Heavenly Inheritance has been Made, who need the Balm of the Heavenly Gilead, and yet perseveringly cast It from them! May we remember that in every day, and every hour of each day, The SAVIOUR is Ready with His Healing and Sustaining Influence, and Waiting to be Gracious, and to Administer Consolation to Such as will come unto Him with a just sense of their sins and iniquities, and a desire, through His Appointed Means, to be Cleansed and Purified therefrom. These are the infirmities, for the Cure of which GOD should daily be intreated: and enviable is their lot, comparatively, who are in body dumb and maimed, and lame and blind, if their Souls have the faith to be Saved from everlasting torment. At the same time, towards mitigating the severity of corporeal suffering, and supplying the place of natural defects or disabilities, we are encouraged, by the Example of our Gracious REDEEMER, to lend our efforts and exert our means as we have opportunity; and thus do we most effectually prove our gratitude to That REDEEMER for the Blessing of Salvation so Freely Offered to ourselves.

St. Mark's account is thus: *And again, Departing from the Coasts of Tyre and Sidon, JESUS Came unto the Sea of Galilee, through the midst of the Coasts of Decapolis. And they bring unto Him One that was deaf and had an impediment in his speech: and they beseech Him to put His Hand upon him; and He Took him aside from the Multitude, and Put His Fingers into his ears; and He Spit and Touched his tongue: and Looking up to Heaven He Sighed, and Saith unto him, "Ephphatha!" that is, "Be Opened!" And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain! And He Charged them that they should tell no Man: but the more He Charged them, so*

*much the more a great deal they published It: and were beyond measure astonished, saying, "HE hath Done all things well; He Maketh both the Deaf to hear, and the Dumb to speak."*—Chap. vii, 31 to 37.

Isaiah had foretold that such would be the Influence of our SAVIOUR'S Presence upon Earth, saying, *GOD will Come and Save; then the eyes of the Blind shall be Opened, and the ears of the Deaf shall be unstopped; then shall the lame Man leap as an hart; and the tongue of the Dumb sing!* And thence does the Prophet offer this admonition; *Strengthen the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees! Say to them, that are of a fearful heart, "Be strong; fear not!"*—Chap. xxxv, 3, 4, 5, 6.

See observations on Matthew xi, 5.

△ Then JESUS Called His Disciples unto Him, and Said, "I have Compassion on the Multitude, because they continue with Me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not Send them away fasting: lest they faint in the way." And His Disciples say unto Him, "Whence should we have so much bread in the Wilderness, as to fill so great a Multitude?" And JESUS Saith unto them, "How many loaves have ye?" And they said, "Seven! and a few little fishes." And He Commanded the Multitude to sit down on the ground. And He Took the seven loaves and the fishes, and Gave Thanks, and Brake them, and Gave to His Disciples, and the Disciples to the Multitude: and they did All eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken meat that was left, seven baskets full: and they, that did eat, were four thousand Men, besides Women and Children. And He Sent away the Multitude, and Took ship; and Came into the Coasts of Magdala.—32 to 39.

See the Observations on the similar Miracle recorded in Chap. xiv, 15 to 21.

This Attention of CHRIST to the bodily wants, after He had so largely and liberally and laboriously Administered to the physical necessities of so Many, is an Exemplification of That Tenderness and Consideration, Which never Forsook Him, and were Calculated powerfully to sustain the esteem and reverence for His Character, and to lead to further reflections on The Essential DIVINITY of His Nature. Though the inquiry by the Disciples might seem to indicate rather a deadness of faith in them, yet possibly they might rather have been led to doubt whether JESUS would, on that occasion, Put forth the Might of His Creative Power, after having Done so much. A Proof that to The DIVINE Power Belongs the Sudden Multiplication of Provision, must have been familiar to the Readers or Hearers of the Old Testament, for it is there recorded in the 2nd Kings iv, 42 to 44, that when Elisha ordered his Servitor in Gilgal to set before the Sons of the Prophets, *one hundred in number, the twenty loaves of barley, bread of the first Fruits*, being all he had, and on the Servitor remonstrating, he was thus answered by the Prophet, *Give unto the People, that they may eat! for Thus Saith The LORD, "They shall eat, and shall leave thereof!" So he set it before them; and they did eat; and left thereof, according to the Word of The LORD.*

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *In those days the Multitude being very great, and having nothing to eat, JESUS Called His Disciples unto Him, and Saith unto them, "I have Compassion on the Multitude, because they have now been with Me three days, and have nothing to eat: and if I Send them away fasting to their own houses, they will faint by the way; for divers of them came from far."* And His Disciples answered Him, "From whence can a Man satisfy these Men with bread here in the Wilderness?" And He Asked them, "How many loaves have ye?" And they said, "Seven!" And He Commanded the People to sit down on the ground: and He Took the seven loaves, and Brake, and Gave Thanks, and Brake, and Gave to His Disciples to set before them: and they did set them before the People: and they had a few small fishes: and He Blessed, and Commanded to set them also before them.

*So they did eat and were filled: and they took up of the broken meat, that was left, seven baskets: and they, that had eaten, were about four Thousand. And He Sent them away.*—Chap. viii, 1 to 9.

The Boundless Benevolence of The ALMIGHTY in Filling all things plenteously with His Goodness, and Giving unto every One severally as he hath need, would irresistibly, as it were, draw forth from every rightly regulated heart and mind, thanksgiving and praise on every fresh instance of partaking those Blessings, and should induce us to implore Him to Sanctify our food, as His unrequited Gifts to our use, and ourselves through His SPIRIT to His Service for the Sake of JESUS CHRIST; by Whom Alone GOD is Reconciled to us, and His Providence and Grace are Continued to us.

CHAP. XVI.—The Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and tempting JESUS, desired Him that He would Shew them a Sign from Heaven. HE Answered, and Said unto them, “When it is Evening, ye say, ‘It will be fair weather; for the sky is red:’ and in the Morning, ‘It will be foul weather to day, for the sky is red and lowring.’ O ye Hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky! but can ye not discern the Signs of the Times? A wicked and adulterous Generation seeketh after a Sign; and there shall no Sign be given unto it, but the Sign of the Prophet Jonas.” And He left them, and Departed.—1 to 4. △

Still the same inveterate prejudice actuates the Pharisees, notwithstanding the repeated Miracles Wrought by CHRIST in Manifestation at once of The DIVINITY of His Nature, and the Benevolent Object of His Incarnation! The Sadducees too, though hostile to the Pharisees in many of their leading points of discipline and doctrine, nevertheless concurred with them in this, proving thereby the equal influence over them of Spiritual pride, and its baneful attendant and consequence, Self-imposed blindness of understanding, and a heart not right with its GOD: they both required a Sign from Heaven, though their Bible had not Encouraged or Justified any such claim or expectation; and had their desire been complied with, there would have been no sphere for the exercise of their faith, the very foundation of Salvation. Even had a Sign been Given, unless it had been a Sign that would have accorded with their own prejudiced opinions as to any Revelation from On HIGH, it would most probably have proved to them ineffectual.

See the observations on Chapter xii, 38, 39.

St. Mark's narrative is briefly thus: *And straightway He (JESUS) Entered into a ship with His Disciples, and Came into the parts of Dalmanutha: and the Pharisees came forth, and began to question with Him, seeking of Him a Sign from Heaven, tempting Him. And He Sighed deeply in His Spirit, and Saith, “Why doth this Generation seek after a Sign? Verily, I Say unto you, There shall no Sign be Given unto this Generation.” And He Left them, and Entering into the Ship, again Departed to the other side.*—Chap. viii, 10 to 13. That The SON of The MOST HIGH, The LORD of all Power and Might, should Sigh in the Spirit at the obstinacy and Self-deceit of Mankind, in rejecting His Offer of Salvation, when He might have Swept every Offender from the face of the Earth, and the whole Earth itself, is an Evidence of That Love of GOD, Which Surpasseth all understanding.

St. Luke's account is that Some of the People tempting Him, (JESUS,) sought of Him a Sign from Heaven! And when the People were gathered thick together, He Began to Say, “This is an evil Generation; they seek a Sign; and there shall no Sign be given it, but the Sign of Jonas, the Prophet: for as Jonas was a Sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also The SON of Man be to this Generation. The Queen of the South shall rise up in the Judgment with the Men of this



*Generation, and condemn them; for she came from the Utmost Parts of the Earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon: and, behold, A Greater than Solomon is here! The Men of Nineve shall rise up in the Judgment with this Generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, A Greater than Jonas is here!*"—Chap. xi, 16. 29. 32.

The effect and force of the observation is precisely in unison with that in the Text: it was to expose the folly and absurdity of those, who attentively watch the changes of Nature, (so as to anticipate consequences from particular causes,) but who neglect the weightier matters relating to their Everlasting Interests; omitting the proper subject for consideration, the study of the Word of GOD, and the state of their Immortal Souls. Here was an Express Avowal by JESUS, that The Long Expected MESSIAH was Present to their view: and yet, amidst the Miracles That Marked His Progress, and the Wisdom That Graced His Utterance, how Few believed to the Saving of their Souls!

It is the corruption of the heart and that perversion of our high privilege of free Agency, which even, under the garb sometimes of assumed sanctity or superior religious knowledge, hypocritically or proudly disdains the Counsel of The Meek and Lowly JESUS; whence equally, as from the gross habits of sensuality and Self-indulgence, is the Mind unfitted for the Mysteries of Faith, and the Heart for the Purity and Holiness of Heaven. The study of the Book of Life should be entered upon with the deepest seriousness, and the Character and Offices of The MESSIAH contemplated with the profoundest reverence, and desire to imitate Him: and, amidst the earnestness for Scriptural knowledge, we should be still more anxious and strenuous, by prayer to the Throne of Grace, to have our Lives and conversation rendered consistent in all things Therewith. But as Pride occasioned the downfall of the rebelling Angels, so has it worked the everlasting overthrow of many Spirits of Earth who professed to know GOD, Who Knew them not, except as Hypocrites, and Aliens from the Commonwealth of the Spiritual Israel.

St. Paul had the same obstinacy of wilful blindness and unbelief opposed to him and his Doctrine, and which he thus described: *The Jews require a Sign, and the Greeks seek after Wisdom; but we preach CHRIST Crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness: but unto them which are Called, both Jews and Greeks, CHRIST, The Power of GOD, and The Wisdom of GOD!*—1 Cor, i, 22 to 24.

△ And when His Disciples were come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread. Then JESUS Said unto them, "Take heed, and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees!"—5, 6.

It is from hence obvious, that CHRIST was not, on all occasions, in the habit of Working Miracles for the supply even of His Own Necessities; that the Disciples usually took provision with them, on the journeys or voyages; and that only on extraordinary occasions did JESUS Put forth His Creative Power to Supply Others' Necessities, as well as His Own. From whence we have an useful Lesson of conduct read to us, not to be too presumptuous or confident in The DIVINE Assistance Supernaturally to be Given to us, where our own efforts, or industry, or forethought could have supplied our need; and especially in reference to Scriptural knowledge, *that* Food of the Soul, which, if studiously acquired, would assuredly help us in a time of necessity, when under trial or temptation, and when the famine of the Word of GOD might be spreading around us.

This Caution arose naturally out of the previous interview between CHRIST

d the Pharisees and Sadducees; and was Meant to Guard His Hearers against their subtle, insinuating, seducing, and hypocritical ways.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *Now the Disciples had forgotten to take bread; either had they in the ship with them more than one loaf. And He Charged them, saying, "Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod!"*—Chap. viii, 14, 15.

The additional Mention of the Secular Governor, as an equally dangerous enemy, and whose artifices were to be avoided, was not less wise; as Herod's name was equally bent against the downfall of The MESSIAH'S Opening KINGDOM, and the overthrow of the Reign of Righteousness.

St. Luke's account is as follows: *In the mean time, when there were gathered together an innumerable Multitude of People, insomuch that they trod One upon another, JESUS Began to Say unto His Disciples first of all, "Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy! for there is nothing covered, that shall not be Revealed; neither hid, that shall not be Known: therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness, shall be heard in the Light; and that, which ye have spoken in the ear in closets, shall be proclaimed upon the house tops. And I Say unto you My Friends, Be not afraid of them, that kill the body; and, after that, we no more that they can do! But I will Forewarn you, Whom ye shall fear; Fear Him, Which, after He hath Killed, hath Power to Cast into Hell! Yea, I say unto you, Fear Him!"*—Chap. xii, 1 to 5.

Here was the most direct explanation of What was our SAVIOUR'S meaning in Alluding to the leaven of the Pharisees; and the Reasoning upon it, equally important as it is, doubtless, grew out of a different occasion, being the same as noticed in Matthew x, 28.

The same simile was used by St. Paul and thus also enlarged upon. After saying, *The KINGDOM of GOD is not in Word, but in Power*; and after cautioning his Corinthian Correspondents against vain glorying, he adds, *Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?* And then he thus strongly admonishes them, *Purge out, therefore, the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, ye are unleavened! For even CHRIST, our Passover, is Sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the Feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened Bread of Sincerity and Truth!*—Cor. iv, 20, v, 6 to 8.

And they reasoned among themselves, saying, "It is because we have taken no bread!" Which, when JESUS Perceived, He Said unto them, "O ye of little faith! why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread? Do ye not yet understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five Thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? Neither the seven loaves of the four Thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? How is it that ye do not understand that I Spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees?" Then understood they how that He Bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.—7 to 12.

How very gradually did the minds even of CHRIST'S Own Disciples seem to open to the Light of Spiritual Knowledge and discernment! and how much Human infirmity, mixed with their love and reverence for their MASTER, did they evince! The Censure, Which CHRIST Passed on them, was more on account of their want of faith in doubting His Power to Furnish bread Miraculously, after the Instances they had witnessed of His Doing so, than for the weakness of their understanding and judgment in perverting the almost obvious meaning of His Words, and giving them a construction correspondent with their carnal views of unregenerate Man, rather than the Spiritual and Enlightened sense, Which CHRIST had unceasingly Laboured to Impress them with.

See the observations on Chapter xiv, 17, and Chapter xv, 34.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And the Disciples reasoned among themselves, saying, "It is because we have no bread." And when JESUS Knew it, He Saith unto them, "Why reason ye, because ye have no bread? perceive ye not yet, neither understand? have ye your heart yet hardened? having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember? when I Brake the five loaves among five Thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up?" They say unto Him, "Twelve!" "And when the seven among four Thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up?" And they said, "Seven!" And He Said unto them, "How is it, that ye do not understand?"—Chap. viii, 16 to 21.*

How stubborn and unbending is the heart of Man! What continual exercises of Spiritual watchfulness and discipline and direction does it need, even in situations apparently the most favouring to Spiritual growth and devotedness to CHRIST! It is not the light of the natural eye, that will lead to the understanding of The Gracious Nature of GOD, amidst the Display even of the Wonders of His Works: the memory, too, fails in the impressions it sometimes receives, and which, if continually kept alive by exercise, might fortify the Soul against the doubts and fears that so frequently beset it. The Power of GOD and the Goodness of GOD, and the Knowledge of A MEDIATOR in His Only SON, would clad the Soul in impenetrable armour, and all the assaults and subtle advances of the Adversary of Souls, to undermine its peace, and destroy its Salvation, would be vain and fruitless.

△ When JESUS Came into the Coasts of Cæsarea Philippi, He Asked His Disciples, Saying, "Whom do Men say that I, The SON of Man, am?" And they said, "Some say, that Thou art John the Baptist; Some, Elias; and Others, Jeremias, or One of the Prophets!"—13, 14.

The Title Graciously Taken by CHRIST, and so frequently Used by Him, "*SON of Man*," in perfect consistency with His Office as An Incarnate GOD, and as The MEDIATOR between GOD and Man, is the most Endearing That could be Adopted, as it Exalts our Nature to Brotherhood with The SON of GOD, and should Work in us that Spirit of grateful devotedness to His Precepts and Example, in the Life that is, to justify our hope that He will Acknowledge us, when He Comes to Judge the World, as having been Led by His SPIRIT, when He may Receive us into His Bosom; as, through faith in His Righteousness, Rendered *Sons of GOD*.

See the observations on Chapter viii, 20, ix, 6, and xiv, 2.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And JESUS Went out, and His Disciples, into the Town of Cæsarea Philippi; and by the way, He Asked His Disciples Saying, unto them, "Whom do Men say I am?" And they answered, "John the Baptist: but Some say, Elias: und Others, One of the Prophets."—Chap. viii, 27 to 28.*

St. Luke's account is as follows: *And it came to pass, as JESUS was Alone Praying, His Disciples were with Him, and He Asked them, Saying, "Whom say the People that I am?" They, answering, said, "John the Baptist: but Some say, Elias: and Others say, That One of the old Prophets is risen again."—Chap. ix, 18, 19.* In an earlier part of the same chapter, St. Luke, adverting to Herod, and of his having heard of All That was Done by JESUS, added, *that Herod was perplexed, because that it was said of Some, "that John was risen from the Dead;" and of Some, "that Elias had appeared;" and of Others, "that One of the old Prophets was risen again." And Herod said, "John have I beheaded; but Who is This, of Whom I hear Such Things?" And he desired to see Him.—Chap. ix, 7 to 9.*

JESUS Saith unto the Disciples, "But Whom say ye that I am?" And Simon Peter answered and said, "THOU art The CHRIST, The SON of The Living GOD."—15, 16.


It seems remarkable that CHRIST should Ask His Own Disciples, Who He was; and that Peter alone should say, instead of All bursting out into an acknowledgment that, though JESUS had Condescendingly Owned Himself to be The SON of Man, yet He was also The MESSIAH, "The SON of GOD:" for they had before confessed Him to be "The SON of GOD" on the occasion of His Walking on the Sea, and worshipped Him as Such [Chap. xiv, 33]. On another occasion Peter, as the general Mouth-piece of all the Apostles, limited The DIVINITY of JESUS almost in similar words, when JESUS, in consequence of *Many of His Disciples having gone back, and walked no more with Him, Said unto the Twelve, "Will ye also go away?"* And Simon Peter answered Him, "LORD, to whom shall we go? THOU hast the Words of Eternal Life; and we believe and are sure that THOU art That CHRIST, The SON of The Living GOD!"—John vi, 66 to 69. Martha, the Sister of the beloved Lazarus, made a like avowal of faith in JESUS, as The MESSIAH, though she had abandoned the hope, that He would then Put forth His Mighty power to Restore her Brother, when in a state of animal decomposition, to life, until the general Resurrection; as thus related by St. John xi, 27: "LORD, said Martha,) *I believe that Thou art The CHRIST, The SON of GOD, Which should Come into the World.*" So the Ethiopian Eunuch, Queen Candace's treasurer, Enlightened by The HOLY GHOST, through the preaching of St. Philip, said, "*I believe That JESUS CHRIST is The SON of GOD!*"—Acts viii, 37. And St. John himself gave this further Soul-cheering assurance to the truly Faithful in CHRIST JESUS: *Whosoever shall confess That JESUS The SON of GOD, GOD Dwelleth in him; and he in GOD.*—1 John iv, 15.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: And JESUS Saith unto them, "But Whom say ye, that I am?" And Peter answereth and saith unto Him, "THOU art The CHRIST!"—Chap. viii, 29.

St. Luke's is as follows: JESUS Said unto them, "But Whom say ye that I am?" Peter answering, said, "The CHRIST of GOD!"—Chap. ix, 20.

The Writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, in his usually exalted style, thus attests The DIVINITY of The MESSIAH: *GOD, Who at sundry Times and in divers Manners Spake in Time past unto the Fathers by the Prophets, hath, in these last Days, Spoken unto us by His SON, Whom He hath appointed HEIR of all Things* [Ps. ii, 8]; *by Whom also He Made the Worlds* [John i, 3]; *Who being the Brightness of His Glory* [John i, 14], *and the Express Image of His Person, and Upholding All Things by the Word of His Power, when He had by Himself Purged our sins, Sat down on the Right Hand of The MAJESTY on HIGH* [Ps. cx, 1]: *being Made so much Better than the Angels, as He hath by Inheritance Obtained a more Excellent Name than they: for unto which of the Angels Said He at any time, "THOU art My SON! this day have I Begotten Thee?"* [Ps. ii, 7.] And again, "*I will be to Him A FATHER; and He shall be to Me A SON!*" [2 Sam. vii, 14.] And again, *when He Bringeth in The FIRST BEGOTTEN into the World, He Saith, "And t all the Angels of GOD worship Him!"* [Ps. xcvi, 7.] And of the Angels He saith, "*Who Maketh His Angels Spirits, and His Ministers a flame of Fire.*" [Ps. civ 4.] But unto The SON He Saith, "*THY Throne, O GOD, is for ever and Ever; a Sceptre of Righteousness is the Sceptre of Thy KINGDOM: Thou hast Loved Righteousness, and Hated iniquity; therefore GOD, even Thy GOD, hath Anointed Thee with the Oil of Gladness above Thy Fellows.*" [Ps. xlv, 6, 7.] And Thou, LORD, in the Beginning hast Laid the Foundation

of the Earth; and the Heavens are the Works of Thine Hands: they shall perish; but Thou Remainest: and they all shall wax old, as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt Thou Fold them up; and they shall be changed; but Thou art The Same; and Thy Years shall not fail. [Ps. cii, 25 to 27.] But to which of the Angels Said He at any time, "Sit on My Right Hand, until I Make Thine Enemies Thy Footstool?" [Ps. cx, 1.] Are they not all ministering Spirits, Sent forth to minister for them, who shall be Heirs of Salvation? [Ps. ciii, 21. xxxiv, 7.] Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the Things, Which we have heard, lest at any time we should let Them slip; for if the Word spoken by Angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect So Great Salvation? Which at the first began to be Spoken by The LORD; and was Confirmed unto us by them, that heard Him: GOD also Bearing them Witness, both with Signs and Wonders, and with Divers Miracles and Gifts of The HOLY GHOST, according to His Own Will. For unto the Angels hath He not Put in subjection the World to Come, whereof ye speak. But One in a certain place testified, saying, "What is Man, that Thou art Mindful of him? or the Son of Man, that Thou Visitest him? THOU Madest him a little lower than the Angels; Thou Crownedst him with Glory and Honour, and didst Set him over the Works of Thy Hands; Thou hast Put all things in subjection under his feet." [Ps. viii, 4 to 6.] For in that He Put All in subjection under him, He Left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet All Things Put under him. But we see JESUS, Who was Made a little Lower than the Angels for the Suffering of death, Crowned with Glory and Honour; that He, by the Grace of GOD, should Taste death for every Man. For it Became Him, for Whom are All things, and by Whom are All things, in Bringing many Sons unto Glory, to Make The CAPTAIN of Salvation Perfect through Sufferings [Isa. iv, 4]. For both He, That Sanctifieth, and they who are Sanctified, are All of One [John xvii, 21]; for which Cause He is not Ashamed to Call them Brethren, Saying, "I will Declare Thy Name unto My Brethren; in the midst of the Church will I Sing Praise unto Thee" [Ps. xxii, 22]: and again, "I will Put My Trust in Him" [Ps. xviii, 2]: and again, "Behold, I and the Children, which GOD hath Given Me!" [Isa. viii, 18.] Forasmuch then as the Children are Partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise Took Part of the same; that, through death, He might Destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil; and Deliver them, who through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily He Took not on Him the nature of Angels; but He Took on Him the Seed of Abraham. Wherefore, in all things it behoved Him to be Made Like unto His Brethren, that He might be A Merciful and Faithful HIGH PRIEST in Things Pertaining to GOD, to Make Reconciliation for the sins of the People: for in that He Himself hath Suffered, being Tempted, He is Able to Succour them that are tempted. Wherefore, (adds the Inspired Writer,) holy Brethren, Partakers of the Heavenly Calling, consider The APOSTLE and HIGH PRIEST of our Profession, CHRIST JESUS! Who was Faithful to Him That Appointed Him; as also Moses was faithful in all His (The LORD'S) House [Num. xii, 7]: for This Man was Counted Worthy of more Glory than Moses; inasmuch as He, Who hath Builded the House, hath more honour than the House [Zech. vi, 12, 13]: for every house is builded by some Man: but He, That Built All Things, is GOD. And Moses verily was faithful in all His (The LORD'S) House, as a Servant, for a testimony of Those Things, Which were to be Spoken after: but CHRIST, as A SON, over His Own House: Whose House are we [1 Peter ii, 5], if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.—Heb. i, ii, iii, 1 to 6.

And JESUS Answered and Said unto him, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona; for Flesh and Blood hath not revealed It unto thee, but My FATHER, Which is in Heaven! And I Say also unto thee, That thou art Peter; and upon This Rock I will Build My Church; and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against It. And I will Give unto thee the Keys of the KINGDOM of HEAVEN; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on Earth shall be Bound in Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on Earth shall be Loosed in Heaven." Then Charged He His Disciples that they should tell no Man that He was JESUS, The CHRIST.—17 to 20. 

Such a perfect faith is the result of the Grace of The HOLY GHOST Acting on a meek, willing, obedient and teachable heart; looking up to GOD as The AUTHOR and FINISHER of Faith: and in such a heart so Gifted, Bliss the most pure and permanent, that the Soul is here susceptible of, abides; and is a Well-Spring of Life, and a Foretaste of Heavenly Felicity. St. Paul assures us that *by Grace are we Saved through faith; and that not of ourselves; but that It is the Gift of GOD.*—Eph. ii, 8. And again, the same Apostle says, *We speak the Wisdom of GOD in a Mystery, even the hidden Wisdom, Which GOD Ordained before the World unto our Glory; and Which GOD hath Revealed unto us by His SPIRIT.*—1 Cor. ii, 7, 10.

On that faith, which St. Peter, by the Power of The HOLY GHOST, so prominently exhibited, and which, in a greater or less, degree, has belonged and will continue to belong to every true Disciple and Follower of CHRIST, our Blessed SAVIOUR has Founded and Reared His Church, and of Which St. Paul thus declares All true Believers in CHRIST, as The SON of GOD, to be component Members; saying, *Ye are no more Strangers and Foreigners, but Fellow-Citizens with the Saints, and of the Household of GOD: and are Built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, JESUS CHRIST Himself being the Chief Corner Stone; in Whom all the Building, fitly Framed together, Groweth unto an Holy Temple in The LORD: in Whom ye also are Built together for an Habitation of GOD, through The SPIRIT.*—Eph. ii, 19 to 22. Hitherto hath This Solemn Declaration of our Blessed SAVIOUR (Made in an unusually Impassioned Strain,) been Sacredly Fulfilled; for the Church of CHRIST, Which is in the hearts of the Faithful, hath withstood all the assaults and underminings of the World, the Flesh, and the Devil; and the Gates of Hell have not prevailed against It.

This peculiar distinction of St. Peter, as the Guardian of the Keys of the KINGDOM of HEAVEN, with the mighty authority attached to it, must be understood not literally as confined personally to St. Peter, (for then would all the Apostles have bowed to that authority as controuling them,) but as Communicated to the faithful Apostles generally, by their prominent Spokesman St. Peter: for CHRIST could not but Foreknow, how that Apostle would perseveringly deny Him in His most trying Hour: and that even his utmost zeal for His Cause after His Resurrection and Ascension would be far out-done by that of the great Apostle of the Gentiles, St. Paul. But upon the letter of this Passage, and upon the uncertain tradition of St. Peter's having visited Rome, and on the unwarrantable assumption that he delegated his fullest powers to the Ecclesiastical Authority of that City, do the Papists claim their superiority and infallibility. But such a Delegation of Power to St. Peter would have been inconsistent with the Diffusion and Influence of The HOLY SPIRIT amongst the immediate Followers and Disciples of our LORD; and the early Establishment of Churches in different Countries by the different Apostles and their Adherents, are direct evidences against the fitness or justness of the Romish assumption. And be it remembered that the Church of CHRIST is the Sanctified Spiritual Part of Man, not confined to any particular Place or Age or Country: and that, ever resting on The ROCK of Ages, It has frowned defiance

on the gates of Hell: and surely the vices of the See of Rome have not been Its support. That our SAVIOUR did not Limit this Designation of Peculiar Power to St. Peter is more distinctly evidenced, as we shall see in Chapter xviii of St. Matthew, where it is recorded that our SAVIOUR Used these Words to His Disciples generally: "*Verily I Say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on Earth shall be Bound in Heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on Earth shall be Loosed in Heaven. Again I Say unto you, That if Two of you shall agree on Earth, as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be Done for them of My FATHER. Which is in Heaven.*"—1 and 18, 19. To the same purport were the Last Words Uttered also to His Disciples generally, immediately previous to His Ascension, and after Breathing on them the Influence of The HOLY GHOST, when He Said to them *All, "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are Remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are Retained."*—John xx, 22, 23. And These Latter Words Form the true Exposition of the preceding Ones in the Text; Which in Themselves are Figurative, the terms bound and loosed obviously signifying, as there Used, not the imprisonment or liberation of the Body, but either the consignment of the faithless Soul to the power of Satan in merited punishment for its rebellion against The GOD, Who Made it; for its rejection of An Incarnate GOD, Who would have Redeemed it; and for its blasphemy against The HOLY GHOST, Who would have Sanctified and Fitted it for That pure and perfect Joy, Which will be shared in communion with all the Saints in Heaven: or, the entire freedom from the bondage under sin; and the Gracious Deliverance from the power of Satan, and the fear of A Judgment to come. Great as was the Power, with Which CHRIST thus Clothed His Disciples, it was not greater than, with the most well-founded Confidence, He Might Consistently Invest them with; since He, at the same time, Gave unto them, to govern them in the right and wholesome exercise of It, the Fulness of the Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT, the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding; and not only a sound mind, but a penetration into the hearts of Others.

The Motive for CHRIST'S Injunction of secrecy, as to His being "*The SON of GOD,*" may be attributed to His Wish, that His Works should Declare Him. And how much nearer in the resemblance and imitation of their SAVIOUR are they, who, seeking the good and not the praise of their Fellow Mortals, do the Work of The LORD; abundantly satisfied with the consciousness of His Approving Eye, and leaving their works in the service of The LORD, to meet the praise of Men, when amidst the silence of the tomb their ear must be impenetrably deaf to it.

St. Paul avowed that he *conferred not with Flesh and Blood, when it Pleased GOD to Reveal His SON to him, that he might preach Him among the Heathen.*—Gal. i, 15, 16.

St. Mark states that *JESUS Charged the Disciples that they should tell no Man of Him*—Chap. viii, 30.

So St. Luke: *And JESUS straitly Charged the Disciples, and Commanded them to tell no Man That Thing* [Chap. ix, 21]; Assigning as the Reason, *That the SON of Man must Suffer many Things, and be Rejected of the Elders and Chief Priests and Scribes, and be Slain, and be Raised the third day.*—22.

△ From that time forth Began JESUS to Shew unto His Disciples, how that He must Go unto Jerusalem, and Suffer many Things of the Elders and Chief Priests and Scribes, and be Killed; and be Raised again the third day.—21.

From hence it is obvious that the Priests and Scribes and Elders, who were most familiarly acquainted with the Hebrew Scriptures and the Prophecies Recorded in Them, were so blinded by prejudice in their interpretation of Those

Prophecies, so far as Related to The Promised MESSIAH, that though He was so Set forth Therein, as Meek and Lowly of Heart, and as Destined to Suffer, they would not so receive Him, notwithstanding the Grace and Truth Which He Manifested amidst His Humiliation. To the Disciples of JESUS, less read in Those Scriptures, from the nature of their occupations, it was only that our SAVIOUR Unfolded the Fulfilment of the Prophetic Destiny Awaiting Him.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And JESUS Began to Teach the Disciples that The SON of Man must Suffer many Things, and be Rejected of the Elders, and of the Chief Priests, and Scribes; and be Killed; and after three days Rise Again.*—Chap. viii, 31.

St. Luke's report of our SAVIOUR'S Saying, on this occasion, to His Disciples, has been just before quoted.

On another occasion, and as the awful Season of Suffering drew nearer, our SAVIOUR again Said to His Disciples, as recorded also by St. Luke, thus: *Then JESUS Took unto Him the Twelve, and Said unto them, "Behold, We Go up to Jerusalem; and All Things That are Written by the Prophets concerning The SON of Man shall be Accomplished: for He shall be Delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be Mocked, and spitefully Entreated and Spitted on: and they shall Scourge Him, and Put Him to Death: and the third day He shall Rise again!" And the Disciples (adds the Evangelist,) understood none of These Things: and This Saying was Hid from them; neither knew they the Things Which were Spoken.*—Luke xviii, 31 to 34.

Then Peter took Him; and began to rebuke Him, saying, "Be it far from Thee, LORD! This shall not be unto Thee!"—22.

Thus it seems that, not only were not the Disciples deeply read in the Scriptures, but they were incredulous of What CHRIST Declared to them would be the Fulfilment of the Prophecies Therein concerning Himself. And in the simplicity of their thoughts, and in the tenderness of their regard towards Him, they would, perhaps, have stayed the Progress of the Stupendous Work of Man's Redemption, and have withdrawn our SAVIOUR from the Sufferings Essential to the Accomplishment of His Mediatorial Office. Nor does it appear that they were fully impressed with and convinced of the Truth of What their beloved LORD and MASTER Said to them even upon This most Momentous of Subjects, until after, not only His Sufferings and Death, but even His Resurrection: for when *the Women, and certain Others with them, came to the Sepulchre on the first day of the week, two Men in Shining Garments said unto them, "Why seek ye The Living among the Dead? HE is not here, but is Risen! Remember how He Spake unto you, when He was yet in Galilee, Saying, 'The SON of Man must be Delivered into the hands of sinful Men, and be Crucified, and the third day Rise again.'*" And they remembered His Words, and returned from the Sepulchre, and told All These Things unto the Eleven, and to All the Rest: and their words seemed to them as idle tales; and they believed them not. Then arose Peter, and ran unto the Sepulchre, and, stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at That Which was Come to Pass.—Luke xxiv, 1. 4 to 9. 11, 12.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And JESUS Spake That Saying Openly. And Peter took Him, and began to rebuke Him.*—Chap. viii, 32.

But He Turned and Said unto Peter, "Get thee behind Me, Satan! thou art an offence unto Me: for thou savourest not the Things That be of GOD; but those that be of Men!"—23.

This affords another reason for rejecting the literal understanding of the



19th verse as applied personally and exclusively to St. Peter. To be characterised as being, at least, influenced by the very Fiend of iniquity, over whom Peter was to have had supreme controul; and to be Exclaimed against as an Abomination in the Sight of Him, Who, Himself All Purity and Perfection, Knew intimately the heart of Man, would seem utterly inconsistent with a previous Delegation of pre-eminent Authority from The OMNIPOTENT in Spiritual Matters, alike Infallible in Its Direction, and Unfailing in Its Duration. This conduct of St. Peter was an instance of the weakness of Human judgment, when influenced by feeling only, even though not of an unamiable kind. The forwardness of zeal, under the impulse of imagination not submitted to the sobriety of Scriptural Rules and Spiritual Wisdom, would often defeat the Benevolent Intentions of The DEITY Himself towards Mankind in general. And of that disposition Satan, in all the artful subtlety that he unceasingly employs toward working out Mankind's irretrievable ruin, often avails himself. Man thinketh not as GOD Thinketh. Had Peter's remonstrance prevailed, Man's Redemption would have remained Uneffected: for had CHRIST been Dissuaded from Going up to Jerusalem, He might not have been Crucified; and we should, therefore, have been without a Sufficient Sacrifice and Propitiation for our sins; and thus would the aim of that Arch-Enemy of Man, Satan, have taken effect: whence it is to be inferred, that in the proposition Peter made, he was prompted by the suggestion of that Infernal Tempter and Seducer; though with so much craftiness as for Peter to have been deceived thereby into a train of thought and feeling, as conscientiously to experience the responsibility of having put forth the advice spontaneously.

St. Mark's continuation of the narrative is thus: *But when JESUS had Turned about, and Looked on His Disciples, He Rebuked Peter, Saying, "Get thee behind Me, Satan! for thou savourest not the Things, That be of GOD; but the things, that be of Men."*—Chap. viii, 33.

△ Then Said JESUS unto His Disciples, "If any Man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me! For Whosoever will save his life, shall lose it: and Whosoever will lose his life for My Sake, shall find it: for what is a Man profited, if he shall gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul? or, what shall a Man give in exchange for his Soul?"—24 to 26.

A faithful Servant has no thought, no wish, no object, but the discharge of his duties to a loving and a beloved Master; nay, for conscience he is diligent in his calling, though he be under a hard Task-Master. A true Disciple of JESUS, Who was Himself all Meekness and Condescension and of the Tenderest Compassion, Who Poured Wisdom from His Lips, and Beamed Benevolence from His Eye, Who Dispensed the Sure Hope of Salvation and of a Glorious Immortality, would, One should have supposed, have gloried in the most implicit obedience to his MASTER'S Commandments; and have counted all things but loss for the Excellency of the Gain of CHRIST JESUS, his LORD. Through every trial and difficulty One might have expected each Disciple would, like the Martyrs of after-time, have followed his DIVINE MASTER, in the confidence, that even to suffer with Him, would be to be highly Exalted, when, the faint struggle for life being over, neither the Powers of Darkness or Persecution, nor the malice or ingenuity of Man could longer oppress the Righteous, thus Encircled by The SAVIOUR within the Pale of Eternal Salvation. But such was not the fortitude of His most attached Disciples, because their faith was not fully fixed: for with all their reverence for JESUS, and, doubtless, contemplating Him, from the Instances of His Goodness and Evidences of His Power, as more than Mortal, they had not, till after His Resurrection and Ascension, regarded Him as "Very

GOD." We, who now live, have seen Him, with our Spiritual eyes, Alive and Dead, and Alive again in Glory and Majesty and Power, as of The GODHEAD; and we, professing to be His Disciples, should deny ourselves all pursuits and indulgencies Forbidden by Him, and all Selfish and sensual and worldly views, and should take up our cross, bearing with indignities and persecutions, if offered us, for His Sake, and enduring all things after His Glorious Example, for the Excellency of the Hope, that is in us, through the Efficacy of His Merits and Mediation in our behalf.

See the observations on Chapter x, 38.

The account of this Address of our SAVIOUR, as given by St. Mark, is as follows: *And when He had Called the People unto Him with His Disciples also, He Said unto them, "Whosoever will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross, and follow Me! For Whosoever will save his life, shall lose it; but Whosoever shall lose his life for My Sake and the Gospel's, the Same shall save it. For what shall it profit a Man, if he shall gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul? or what shall a Man give in exchange for his Soul?"*—Chap. viii, 34 to 37.

The narrative by St. Luke is thus: *And JESUS Said to them all, "If any Man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me! For Whosoever will save his life, shall lose it; but Whosoever will lose his life for My Sake, the Same shall save it. For what is a Man advantaged, if he gain the whole World, and lose himself, or be cast away?"*—Chap. ix, 23 to 25. And in another place the same Evangelist relates that *there went great Multitudes with JESUS; and He Turned, and Said unto them, "If any Man come to Me, and hate not his Father and Mother, and Wife and Children, and Brethren, and Sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My Disciple: and Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after Me, cannot be My Disciple."*—Chap. xiv, 25 to 27.

As was the Doctrine of The MASTER to His Disciples; so in effect was that of the Apostles, after the confirmation of their faith therein, to their Auditors; for both St. Paul and Barnabas preached that *we must, through much tribulation, enter into The KINGDOM of GOD*.—Acts xiv, 22. So also St. Paul, in writing to the Thessalonian Converts, saith, *Ye, Brethren, became Followers of the Churches of GOD, which in Judea are in CHRIST JESUS: for ye also have suffered like things of your own Countrymen, even as they have of the Jews; who both killed The LORD JESUS, and their own Prophets, and have persecuted us: and we sent Timotheus, our Brother and Minister of GOD, and our Fellow-Labourer in the Gospel of CHRIST, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith; that no Man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are Appointed thereunto: for verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation.*—1 Thess. ii, 14, 15, and iii, 2 to 4. For, as in another place the same Apostle saith to his Disciple Timothy, *All, that will live godly in CHRIST JESUS, shall suffer persecution; therefore, (he adds,) Watch thou in all things! Endure afflictions! Do the work of an Evangelist! Make full proof of Thy Ministry!*—2 Tim. iii, 12, and iv, 5.


The love of GOD is enmity with the World; and a righteous discharge of Christian duties is, as it were, a double warfare, that of Self-denial and mortification, to keep within the bounds of temperance and moderation the passions of our Nature; and resistance to the allurements of the unhallowed pleasures of the World: and, secondly, fortitude and patience and perseverance amid the subtle advances of Satan, the assaults of the Infidel and Blasphemer, the contempt of the Proud, the ridicule of the Worldly-Wise, the sneers of the Malicious, and the indifference of the Many, who live without GOD in the World. These are the exercises of Faith in the Life that is; and happily The whole Armour of GOD is the Equipment of Those, who thus perseveringly engage in such warfare:

nor is the victory in the end uncertain, nor the Reward only the fleeting honour of the praise of Men, but a Crown of Glory and a Life of perfect Happiness and endless Peace in the World to Come. These are the exercises of Patience, Forbearance and Zeal, in which a true Disciple will be necessarily required to practice himself; and, if he put his trust in The LORD, he will not be confounded, but will be Enabled, by The HOLY SPIRIT, to fight this good fight of Faith, to finish his course, and to come off more than Conqueror through JESUS CHRIST, Who Sustaineth him; and, having thus done his duty to GOD, his Fellow-Creatures, and himself, to stand, in the hour of death, and in the Day of Judgment, strong in the assurance of a participation in the Glorious Triumph of The Great CAPTAIN of his Salvation over the Powers of Spiritual Darkness, and the great Enemy of Souls. And what degree of misery, what severity of trial, what ingenuity of persecution, should we not, in the moment of our departure hence, even rejoice with a holy joy at our having endured patiently, and without having made shipwreck of our faith, if encountered for CHRIST'S and Righteousness' Sake: since even though it run through the longest space of Human life, and with scarcely any intermission, if it procure for us Exaltation, and Honour and Fulness of Joy in the Presence of GOD and His Angels in Eternity, how Inestimable will be the Result? To withhold from The Almighty and All-Merciful GOD, Who Freely Gave us Life, and Light, and all Things, and Who, by His SON and by His SPIRIT, is Willing to Redeem and to Sanctify us unto endless Life and Heavenly Communion, the dedication of this short and uncertain period of existence, and all the powers and faculties of Soul and Body to His Honour and in observance of His Laws, is, indeed, most perversely and infatuatedly to choose the evil and refuse the Good; to misdirect those qualities so Graciously Bestowed upon us, from the great and glorious purposes for which they were Given, and to crucify The SON of GOD afresh; rejecting the Means of Grace, and setting at nought the hopes of Glory. But to make the aim and object of this Life subservient to a Better, in cheerful obedience to The DIVINE Will, and in faithful Reliance on The DIVINE Word, adopting the Example of our Blessed SAVIOUR as the Rule of our ways, though this may be the occasion of the loss of all things, which the World blindly clings to, is to insure to ourselves a peace in this Life, which the World cannot take away, and an Inheritance in the Next, which will give us the only durable and valuable Riches, and will fill us with joy for evermore. Indeed amidst any portion of suffering, which we may experience for CHRIST'S Sake here, there will be associated with it an inward feeling of Consolation, that will make it, even in the action, rather joyous than grievous; and how much so in the reflection, and in the prospect of its consequence, that of finding our Spiritual Lives to be Everlastingly Glorified with JESUS.

△ On another occasion St. John relates our SAVIOUR to have Said, "*He, that loveth his Life, shall lose it; and he, that hateth his Life in this World, shall keep it unto Life Eternal.*"—Chap. xii, 25.

All the fulness of the riches of this World, and the possession of every object of Human wishes, if not directed and tempered by Spiritual Wisdom, and by a subserviency to the acquirement of Heavenly Treasures, never fully satisfy the mind; but, on the contrary, still leave a void, and a restlessness after some happiness unattained,—a happiness, the secret of which is only in the breast of the pious and the faithful Christian. And the reason is obvious why this must be so; since in our Spiritual Nature we are Immortal, and cannot, therefore, rest contented with what cannot fit us for or follow us into our Immortal State; but which, when this Life leaves us, must leave us also. To exchange the things of Time for the Treasure Which is in Heaven, is the part of true Wis-

dom. Indeed, not only does temporal prosperity not essentially profit us, if we, by the abuse thereof, put in jeopardy the participation in the Blessedness of Beatified Spirits in The KINGDOM of HEAVEN, but it is unwise to seek for or indulge in it immoderately, if we would aim at the truest happiness which this Life can yield, independently of the hope of a Life to come, and which is to be found in Prudence, and Temperance and Contentment. And when added to these, which are the virtues of Philosophy, a cheerful obedience is rendered to the Will of GOD, a ready acquiescence in The DIVINE Dispensations, and all the gratitude manifested that should arise from the contemplation of the unspeakable Blessings of Creation and Redemption, then is it that in their richest productiveness, both the Life that is, and That, which is to come, are enjoyed. Conscience tells us that we are accountable Beings, a Truth which Holy Writ in its every page Confirms; and as our Portion here is Allotted us to be made tributary to the Soul's eternal well-being, so in proportion to our wisely or unwisely using what of power, riches, talent, or other faculty or property may be Assigned us, will be our Condition in Eternity. No Man hath redeemed his own Soul; for nothing that he hath of this World's wealth can be at all compared with it in value; and as that also, with all else that we possess, is the free Gift of GOD, Whose Power is Absolute, and His Decrees Founded in Goodness and Wisdom and Truth, so should we, both in Soul and Body, guide and govern ourselves by His Prescribed Rules to secure Salvation to our Souls and Glorification to our Bodies, through faith in the Redemption Wrought for Such as are CHRIST'S at His Second Coming. *Hear this, (said the Inspired Psalmist,) all ye People! give ear all ye Inhabitants of the World; both Low and High, Rich and Poor together! My mouth shall speak of Wisdom; and the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding. They, that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches, None of them can, by any means, redeem his Brother, nor give to GOD a ransom for him!—Ps. xlix, 1 to 4. 6 to 8.*

For The SON of Man shall Come in the Glory of His FATHER with His Angels; and then  He shall Reward every Man according to his works.—27.

The Blessed JESUS, Transcendant in All the MAJESTY of HEAVEN, Triumphant over Sin and Death, and Attended by all the Angelic Host, shall Come a Second Time, in His Glorified Human Nature, to Judge the World: and Judge it He will in Righteousness and Perfect Holiness, as well as in Irresistible Power. And they, that have been faithful in What was Committed to them as a Sacred Trust upon Earth, shall be Blessed with the Exhaustless and Inestimable Treasures of The Riches of DIVINE Love. But they, that have done evil continually, and have persisted in it even unto the end of their season of probation, without Self-condemnation and repentance, and without devoutly seeking for Pardon and Reconciliation, through the Offered Atonement of CHRIST, shall be Cast out into outer Darkness in all the horror of Self-reproach, remorse, tribulation, and endless despair.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: "*Whosoever, therefore, shall be ashamed of Me and of My Words in this adulterous and sinful Generation; of him also shall The SON of Man be Ashamed, when He Cometh in the Glory of His FATHER with the Holy Angels.*"—Chap. viii, 38.

Alas! how awful is it to contemplate the extent of this offending! How Many are there, who do not actually blaspheme the Name of JESUS, but even secretly and inwardly acknowledge, yet blush publicly to avow Him, as The only Hope of their Salvation; and who entertain faith in Him, and desire to do Him

honour, yet have not the fortitude to acknowledge it amongst the Worldlings. Grant, O GOD, that this sin be not henceforth laid to our charge!

St. Luke's narrative is thus: "*For whosoever shall be ashamed of Me and of My Words, of him shall The SON of Man be Ashamed, when He shall Come in His Own Glory, and in His FATHER'S and of the Holy Angels.*"—Chap. ix, 26.

The Prophet Daniel had Revealed to him in Vision This Sublime Array of Judgment, and Which he thus figuratively describes: *I beheld till the Thrones were Cast down; and The ANCIENT of Days did Sit, Whose Garment was white as snow, and the Hair of His Head like the pure wool: His Throne was like the fiery flame, and His Wheels as burning fire: a Fiery Stream Issued and Came forth from before Him: Thousand Thousands ministered unto Him; and ten thousand times Ten Thousand stood before Him: the Judgment was Set, and the Books were Opened! I saw in the night Visions, and behold, ONE, like The SON of Man, Came with the Clouds of Heaven, and Came to The ANCIENT of Days; and they brought Him near before Him. And there was Given Him Dominion and Glory, and a KINGDOM, that all People, Nations, and Languages should serve Him: His Dominion is an Everlasting Dominion, Which shall not Pass away; and His KINGDOM That, Which shall not be Destroyed.*—Dan. vii, 9, 10, 13, 14.

Pointing to the Same Great Event, the Apostle St. Jude thus couples his confirmation of the Prophecy of Enoch, the Seventh from Adam, with warning or with Consolation to Those who reject or Those who respect its admonition: *The LORD Cometh with Ten Thousand of His Saints, to Execute Judgment upon All, and to Convince All, that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches, which ungodly Sinners have spoken against Him. These are Murmurers, Complainers, walking after their own lusts: and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having Men's persons in admiration, because of advantages. But, Beloved, (adds St. Jude,) remember ye the Words which were spoken before of the Apostles of our LORD JESUS CHRIST; how that they told you, "There should be Mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts:" These be they, who separate themselves, sensual, having not The SPIRIT! But ye, Beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy Faith, praying in The HOLY GHOST, keep yourselves in the love of GOD, looking for the Mercy of our LORD JESUS CHRIST unto Eternal Life! And of Some have compassion! making a difference. And Others save with fear; pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the Flesh! Now unto Him, That is Able to Keep you from falling, and to Present you faultless before the Presence of His Glory with exceeding joy, to The Only Wise GOD, our SAVIOUR, be Glory, and MAJESTY, Dominion and Power both now and ever!*—14 to 25.


*The work of a Man shall The ALMIGHTY Render unto him, and Cause every Man to find according to his ways. Yea, surely GOD will not Pervert Judgment, said the Patriarch, Job [xxxiv, 11, 12.] Power Belongeth unto GOD; and unto The LORD Belongeth Mercy: and He Rendereth to every Man according to his work, said the Psalmist David. [Ps. lxii, 11, 12.]*

JEHOVAH had Declared, by the mouth of His Prophet Jeremiah, "*I, The LORD, Search the heart, I Try the reins, (thoughts,) even to Give every Man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.*"—Chap. xvii, 10. And the same Prophet, when devoutly addressing The DEITY, as Great in Council and Mighty in Work, thus expressed himself, *Thine Eyes are Open upon all the ways of the Sons of Men, to Give every One according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.*—Chap. xxxii, 18, 19.

*The Judgment of GOD, (as St. Paul saith,) will be according to Truth; and*

at Its Revelation *He will Render to every Man according to his deeds; to them, who, by patient continuance in well doing, seek for Glory and Honour and Immortality, Eternal Life: but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the Truth, but obey unrighteousness, Indignation and Wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every Soul of Man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile: but Glory, Honour, and Peace to every Man that worketh good, to the Jew first and also to the Gentile: for there is no Respect of Persons with GOD: for as Many, as have sinned without Law, shall also perish without Law; and as Many, as have sinned in the Law, shall be Judged by the Law; (for not the Hearers of the Law are just before GOD; but the Doers of the Law shall be Justified: for when the Gentiles, which have not the Law, do by Nature the Things contained in the Law, these, having not the Law, are a Law unto themselves, which shew the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing One Another:)* in the Day when GOD shall Judge the secrets of Men by JESUS CHRIST.—Rom. ii, 2. 6 to 16. And the same Apostle admonishes us that *we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of CHRIST; that every One may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.*—2 Cor. v, 10.

In the Revelation to St. John it is thus Recorded: *These Things Saith The SON of GOD, "All the Churches shall know that I am He, Which Searcheth the reins and hearts; and I will Give unto every One of you according to your works."*—Chap. ii, 18. 23. And again, *"Behold, I Come quickly, and My Reward is with Me, to Give every Man according as his work shall be. I am ALPHA and OMEGA, The BEGINNING and The END, The FIRST and The LAST."*—Chap. xxii, 12, 13.

"Verily, I Say unto you, There be Some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see The SON of Man Coming in His KINGDOM."—28. 

Of Those around our SAVIOUR Some survived and were present at His Ascension into Heaven, amidst the acclamations of the Angelic Host. In the glass of Prophecy Abraham had seen the Day of The MESSIAH'S Glory, and had rejoiced to see It: but the Evidence, which was brought fully to the senses of the Apostles, confirmed them in the fulness of a faith in JESUS, as The SON of GOD, and The JUDGE of all the World. In a Spiritual Light the Faithful of this our day (and GOD Grant that we may be amongst the Number!) see, though as in a glass darkly, the Glories of That Day, when The SON of Man shall be fully Revealed to all Flesh as The SON of GOD; when every knee shall bow to Him, and every tongue shall confess Him "The LORD of Life and Light and all Things!" and every Soul shall tremblingly or joyfully await the Utterance of His Judgment on it, unto Blessedness or Woe Eternal! The Transfiguration was a Preliminary view of CHRIST'S Celestial Glory, though confined to Peter and James and John.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And JESUS Said unto them, (the Disciples,) "Verily I Say unto you, That there be Some of them, that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen The KINGDOM of GOD Come with Power."*—Chap. ix, 1.

St. Luke's is as follows: *"But I (JESUS) Tell you of a Truth, there be Some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see The KINGDOM of GOD."*—Chap. ix, 27.

The Writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, in all the confidence that The KINGDOM of CHRIST and His Reign of Peace had Come, and that He had Ascended to His Glory, in Manifestion of His DIVINE Power, said, *We see JESUS, Who was Made a little Lower than the Angels for the Suffering of Death, Crowned with Glory and Honour.*—Heb. ii, 9.

Oh, that we may stand before Him, Clothed with His Righteousness, in His Spiritual KINGDOM!

△ CHAP. xvii.—And after six days, JESUS Taketh Peter, James, and John his Brother, and Bringeth them up into an high Mountain apart, and was Transfigured before them: and His Face did Shine as the Sun, and His Raiment was White as the Light: and, behold, there appeared unto them, Moses and Elias talking with Him.—1 to 3.

The Transfiguration of our SAVIOUR from a Human to a Heavenly Appearance, so Transcendant in Glory beyond what was that of the Sainted Spirits of the venerated Law-giver Moses (that Friend of GOD,) and the Holy Prophet Elijah, both of whom had been, in a peculiar manner, Lifted up from Earth to Heaven, for Elijah tasted not of the Natural Death, and Moses was spared its bitter pains, and, if buried, his sepulchre was never found, was a Confirmation of The DIVINE Nature of JESUS: and how transcendantly does it heighten His Claim to the gratitude of Mankind, when, after this Experience of the Returning Blessedness of Heavenly Communion, He yet Descended from Such Glory as He then Had with The FATHER, to Sojourn further on Earth, and Endure still more of the aggravating and heart-sickening provocation and perversity of Man, and to Encounter the severest Bodily torture, even unto Death, to Save ungrateful Man from Death Eternal! The blind undistinguishing zeal even of these Chosen Apostles, Peter, and James and John, and the fleeting influence of their faith must have been fully in our Gracious SAVIOUR'S Mind; and yet He Persevered in His Great Office of MEDIATOR, even unto the end. Such as Moses and Elijah then appeared, amidst the Glory of The SUN of Righteousness, shall Such of us, as have faith to be Saved through That Mediation, be when the Souls of All of Human Kind shall be assembled at the General Resurrection, and the Everlasting Destiny of Each shall be irreversibly Declared. How unspeakably and inconceivably delighting will then be the communing with Such Spirits as those of Moses, Elijah, Paul, and John; and the Visual Glories of The SON of GOD will then Stand fully Revealed.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And after six days JESUS Taketh with Him Peter and James and John, and Leadeth them up into an high Mountian apart by themselves; and He was Transfigured before them, and His Raiment became Shining, exceeding White as snow; so as no Fuller on Earth can white them: and there appeared unto them Elias with Moses: and they were talking with JESUS.*—Chap. ix, 2 to 4.

St. Luke's is as follows: *And it came to pass, about an eight days after These Sayings, He (JESUS) Took Peter and John and James, and Went up into a Mountain to Pray: and as He Prayed, the Fashion of His Countenance was Altered, and His Raiment was White and Glistening: and, behold, there talked with Him two Men, which were Moses and Elias, who appeared in Glory, and spake of His Decease, Which He should Accomplish at Jerusalem.*—Chap. ix, 28 to 31.

As Angels had come and ministered to Him after His Temptation; so now the Spirits of Just Men, made Perfect, came to sooth and sustain Him before His Entering upon His Trial, and being Led to Execution. And this Manifestation of the Sainted State of The Redeemed through Grace unto Glory, was a Further Proof of Consideration towards the Apostles, to whom Moses and Elijah thus were shewn.

This appearance of the Beatified Spirits of Moses and Elijah favours the belief in the Soul never dying, or having its powers suspended by the separation from the Body, when the latter is yielded to Death. And how exulting is the thought, that in the instant of being removed from this World, the Spirit will return to The GOD Who Gave it, provided it have cherished the fear of That

GOD in the reverential love of Him, and in the thirsting for that Holiness, without which no One can bear the Sight of His Glory. In that great change the true Communion of Saints and the Joy of the Society of Angels will be experienced; and the crowning Bliss of All will be The REDEEMER'S Countenance of Love, and the Wisdom That will Flow from His Lips.

As Moses was the Representative of the Law and Elijah of the Prophets, their subjection to CHRIST was an Evidence of the Fulfilment of both Law and Prophecy in Him, and of the more Exalted Nature of the Gospel Dispensation, of Which He was The AUTHOR and The FINISHER. May we often image to our minds the Glory of That Transfiguration, Which Offers to the contemplation the truest Representation of a State of Heavenly Purity and Peace!

Then answered Peter, and said unto JESUS, "LORD! it is good for us to be here. If Thou Wilt, let us make here three Tabernacles; one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias!"—4.

Good, indeed, must it have been to have witnessed so Holy a Meeting and so Gracious an Appearance: and in the fulness of his heart, Peter proposed to commemorate both The SAVIOUR and the Saints in the most sanctifying and hallowing manner, that occurred to him. And the Disciples that were with him, by their silence, confirmed the offering of reverential homage. But how weak is Human judgment, and how liable to lead it astray are even the amiable impulses of a grateful and generous heart, if not Chastened and Controuled by DIVINE Counsel, and the supplicated Guidance of The HOLY SPIRIT! Peter should have remembered that there was ONE GOD, to Whom Alone worship should be paid; and that CHRIST, The SON of GOD, being ONE with The FATHER, should be Included in that worship, and be acknowledged as The MEDIATOR of Man's Acceptance with GOD: yet the including Moses and Elijah in the same order of adoration was lessening The MAJESTY of HEAVEN, and giving to the Creatures the honour due only to The CREATOR.

St. Mark's account is thus: *And Peter answered, and said to JESUS, "MASTER! it is good for us to be here: and let us make three Tabernacles; one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias!" for he wist not what to say; for they were sore afraid.*—Chap. ix. 5, 6.

St. Luke's is thus: *But Peter, and they that were with him, were heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, they saw His Glory, and the two Men, that stood with Him. And it came to pass, as they departed from Him, Peter said unto JESUS, "MASTER! it is good for us to be here: and let us make three Tabernacles: one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias!" not knowing what he said.*—Chap. ix. 32 to 34.

While he (Peter) yet spake, behold, a bright Cloud overshadowed Them; and, behold, A VOICE out of the Cloud, Which Said, "THIS is My Beloved SON; in Whom I am Well Pleased. Hear ye Him!"—5.

The Same Words, Which were Uttered from Heaven on CHRIST'S Baptism, were here again Used, with an Addition to them of Admonition to give heed to The MESSIAH'S Words, as Those in Which Heavenly Wisdom and Perfect Righteousness would be Found, and on the observance of Which Sanctification and Redemption depended. This narrative of the Evangelist is expressly confirmed by St. Peter himself in his Epistle, wherein he writes, *We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the Power and Coming of our LORD JESUS CHRIST; but were Eye-Witnesses of His*



*MAJESTY: for He Received from GOD, The FATHER, Honour and Glory, when there Came Such A VOICE to Him from The Excellent Glory, "THIS is My Beloved SON, in Whom I am Well Pleased!" And This VOICE, Which Came from Heaven, we heard, when we were with Him in the Holy Mount.—2 Peter i, 16 to 18. To Man had been before Revealed the Pleasure GOD would Have in His Incarnate SON, for the Prophet Isaiah thus preached and wrote as the Oracle of GOD: "Behold My SERVANT, Whom I Uphold; Mine ELECT, in Whom My SOUL Delighteth! I have Put My SPIRIT upon Him: He shall Bring forth Judgment to the Gentiles."—Isa. xlii, 1. Moses, when sojourning upon Earth, thus Prophetically prepared the Jewish Nation for Such A SPIRIT, saying, The LORD, thy GOD, will Raise up unto thee a PROPHET from the midst of thee, of thy Brethren, like unto me: unto Him ye shall hearken! And The LORD Said, "I will Raise them up A PROPHEET from among their Brethren, like unto thee; and will Put My Words in His Mouth: and He shall Speak unto them All That I shall Command Him. And it shall come to pass, that Whosoever will not hearken unto My Words, Which He shall Speak in My Name, I will Require it of him."—Deut. xviii, 15. 17 to 19. Which Words St. Peter expressly discoursed upon, as applicable to JESUS. [Acts iii, 22, 23]. To us, equally as to Those, who were Eye-Witnesses of the Transfiguration, were the Words "Hear ye Him!" DIVINELY Spoken: and if we would justify to ourselves the hope of being transfigured to an equal Glory with Moses and Elijah, and like them to be in perpetual Communion with The SON of GOD in Heavenly Places, we must, while sojourning on Earth, listen to the Warning Voice of That Well-Beloved of GOD, That PROPHET, PRIEST and KING; and rule our thoughts and imaginations, our hopes, and fears, our words and actions by His Gracious Counsel and Heavenward Direction; and build our faith on His Righteousness, as The ROCK of Salvation, when the Earth and its Elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the material Heavens shall pass away as a scroll. The Writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews admonisheth, *We ought to give the more earnest heed to the Things, Which we have heard, lest at any time we should let Them slip: for, How shall we escape, if we neglect so Great Salvation; Which at the first began to be Spoken by The LORD; and was confirmed by them, that heard Him; GOD also Bearing them Witness, both with Signs and Wonders, and with Divers Miracles, and Gifts of The HOLY GHOST, according to His Own Will.*—Heb. ii, 1 to 3.*

△ And when the Disciples heard It, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. And JESUS Came and Touched them, and Said, "Arise, and be not afraid?" And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no Man, save JESUS only.—6 to 8.

So infinitely more pure are Sanctified Spirits and the Inhabitants of Heaven than the purest Mortals upon Earth, that the very sight of the Former fills the Soul with awe and trembling, and clouds the feeble sight of Man with darkness by the Effulgence of the Celestial Glory around them. But when The VOICE of The ALMIGHTY Soundeth in the ear, though Uttering Words, That, when calmly reflected on, are Calculated to Impart Consolation or Joy to the Soul, yet in Their immediate Delivery so inexpressibly Grand and Imposing is the Effect, as to humble us to the dust, and, amidst the consciousness of our own comparative nothingness, to awaken every feeling of our own unworthiness, and of the Mightiness of His Power and the Vastness of His Love. A sense of the Immediate Communion of Such A BEING, so HOLY, JUST, and PURE, must, at the same time, Fill us with apprehension, lest His Vengeance should be Dealt out to us in the measure of Retributive Justice for our daring and wanton neglect of His Worship, and disregard of His Mercies.

The fear of The LORD, which worketh by love, and manifests itself to Him in a deep and holy humility and reverence, is followed by the Comforting Grace of His HOLY SPIRIT. Even the Prophet Daniel, that faithful Servant of The LORD, and whom not the fear of the most imminent and horrifying death could deter from the worship of The LORD, yet when The LORD, by His Angel, Talked with him and Pronounced him "Beloved of The LORD," was afraid, and he fell on his face, and there remained no strength in him, until A Hand Touched him, Which Set him upon his knees, and upon the palms of his hands; and A VOICE Addressed him, Saying, "*O Daniel, A Man greatly Beloved, Fear not! Peace be unto thee; be strong, yea, be strong!*"—Dan. viii, 15, x, 2. 14 to 19.

In the interval, it seems probable that JESUS had Resumed His Human Appearance. And if the Communing between Him and Moses and Elijah was in a Strain and Language above Mortal comprehension, as is not improbable, it may be that He now Expounded to the Disciples the Tenor of That High Inter-course, as having Reference to What was to Befall Him at Jerusalem.

St. Mark thus shortly continues the narrative: *And suddenly, when they had looked round about; they saw no Man any more, save JESUS only with themselves.*—Chap. ix, 8.

St. Luke's continuation is thus: *And when The VOICE was Past, JESUS was Found Alone.*—Chap. ix, 36.

And as they came down from the Mountain, JESUS Charged them, Saying, "Tell the Vision to no Man, until The SON of Man be Risen again from the Dead!"—9.

In the Gospel according to St. Mark, it is thus recorded: *And as they came down from the Mountain He Charged them that they should tell no Man What Things they had seen, till The SON of Man were Risen from the Dead. And they kept That Saying with themselves; questioning One with Another, What the Rising from the Dead should mean?*—Chap. ix, 9, 10.

The continued incredulity of St. Peter, more especially when considering his generally forward zeal and devotedness in his MASTER'S Cause, is surprising; for he had been before told of the Death and Resurrection, That should be of CHRIST; and had, moreover, been justly Censured for his unbelief of the Prophetic Utterance of our SAVIOUR, and for his contracted views of The MESSIAH'S Office. But Peter's insensibility arose, perhaps, more from an inability than unwillingness to understand so Great a Mystery; and from not having sufficiently studied the Holy Scriptures in their Prophetic Delineation of The REDEEMER'S Character and Sufferings.

On the Command of Secrecy some applicable observations may be found at Chapter xvi, 20. It was the Object of JESUS to Develope by degrees the DIVINITY of His Nature to the People at large; and to let the Wisdom of His Addresses, the Benevolence of His Actions, and the Manifestations of His Power, Pave the way for the reception of a faith in His GODHEAD.

St. Luke's continuation is thus: *And they kept It close, and told no Man in those days Any of Those Things Which they had seen.*—Chap. ix, 36.

And His Disciples asked Him, saying, "Why then say the Scribes that Elias must first come?" And JESUS Answered and Said unto them, "Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things: but I Say unto you, That Elias is come already: and they knew him not; but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also The SON of Man Suffer of them." Then the Disciples understood that He Spoke unto them of John the Baptist.—10 to 13.

The Prophet Malachi thus proclaimed the Word of JEHOVAH: "*Behold, I will Send you Elijah, the Prophet, before the Coming of the Great and Dreadful*

*Day of The LORD: and he shall turn the heart of the Fathers to the Children, and the heart of the Children to their Fathers; lest I Come, and Smite the Earth with a Curse.*"—Mal. iv, 5, 6. Of that same awful Day the Prophet Joel, by the Revelation of The ALMIGHTY, and in His Own Words thus spoke: "*And it shall come to pass that I will Pour out My SPIRIT upon all Flesh; and your Sons and your Daughters shall prophecy; your old Men shall dream dreams; your young Men shall see Visions; and also upon the Servants, and upon the Handmaids in those days will I Pour out My SPIRIT: and I will Shew Wonders in the Heavens and in the Earth, Blood, and Fire, and Pillars of Smoke: the Sun shall be turned into darkness, and the Moon into blood, before the Great and Terrible Day of The LORD shall Come.*"—Joel ii, 28 to 31.

It may, however, seem probable that the Day here alluded to, may be the Last Day of this World's existence, when The SON of Man shall Come with Power and Glory to Judge All the Generations of the Earth; and which will, indeed, be a Great and Terrible Day for All, in the Judgment upon whom Mercy cannot, even in A JUDGE of Redeeming Love, find a part; but which, consistently with DIVINE Justice and Holiness, must be so, where, through the life of probation, the Gracious Offer of Redemption has been persistently rejected. In substance and effect, however, This Day may be considered as having Arrived to All, to whom either CHRIST did in PERSON Preach, or to whom His Gospel has since been Revealed.

By the Angel of The LORD, that appeared unto Zacharias, to prepare him for the birth of a Son, who was to be the Elias, the Forerunner of The MESSIAH, of him it was foretold that *he should be great in the Sight of The LORD, and that He should be Filled with The HOLY GHOST; and that Many of the Children of Israel should he turn to The LORD, their GOD; and that he should go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the Fathers to the Children, and the Disobedient to the wisdom of the Just; to make ready a People prepared for The LORD.*—Luke i, 11 to 13. 15 to 17. From the similarity of character between Elijah and John the Baptist in their devotion to the Cause of their GOD, and from the Spiritual Nature of All that concerns Heavenly Things, the name of Elijah (or Elias) may have been used to characterise the qualities of The Messenger of JESUS.

The restoration of all Things by Elias may mean the right direction of all things essential to Man's Spiritual and Everlasting Interests, which was given by the Baptist, when preaching repentance, after setting the example of abstinence and Self-government, and proclaiming that The KINGDOM of HEAVEN was at Hand, in the Prophetic view of the Advent of JESUS as The True MESSIAH.

Considering John as typifying Elijah's second coming, all the forward and persevering zeal of that Prophet was fully exemplified by the Baptist: the persecution, which the Latter endured, was not a less trial of his faith: on the contrary, unlike Elijah, who was at once translated from Earth to Heaven, John like his Blessed MASTER, became subject to the powers of Darkness and the triumph of Death for a time, sealing with his blood the Truth of the Doctrine he preached, and which his Life adorned. See observations on chapter xiv, 3 to 10, and xi, 14.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And they asked Him, saying, "Why say the Scribes, 'That Elias must first come?'" And He Answered, and Told them, "Elias verily cometh first, and restoreth all Things: and how it is Written of The SON of Man, that He must Suffer many things, and be set at nought. But I Say unto you, That Elias is indeed come; and they have done unto him whatsoever they listed, as it is Written of him."*—Chap. ix, 11 to 13.

And when they were come to the Multitude, there came to Him a certain Man, kneeling down to Him, and saying, "Lord! Have Mercy on my Son! for he is lunatick, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water. And I brought him to Thy Disciples; and they could not cure him!" Then JESUS Answered, and Said, "O faithless and perverse Generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I Suffer you? Bring him hither to Me!" And JESUS Rebuked the Devil; and he departed out of him: and the Child was Cured from that very hour.—14 to 18.

Incessant as were the applications to JESUS, whenever and wherever He was Accessible, for Proofs and Signs of His DIVINITY, in the Exercise of the twofold Attributes of Power and Goodness beyond Human attainment, and successful as were such applications when springing from faith and humility, yet from the perversity of the Human heart, and the influence of Human pride, how fleeting was their effect in obtaining a stedfast adherence to the Doctrine of Salvation through a Suffering SAVIOUR! how rare was the exemplification of a full and free conversion of the Soul from the ways and allurements of the World and the wages of Sin to the Paths of Holiness and Purity and Heavenly Love! High and Low, Rich and Poor, sought His Mighty Aid, but sought it principally with carnal and temporal views; and not, as they should have done, with the higher and more exalted motive of regeneration to a Spiritual Life; a zeal and ardent desire for the health of the Soul, and the fitting and preparing it for the Celestial Atmosphere and Communion. This would have been an Object truly worthy the zeal and perseverance that were shewn for the Cure of those diseases and putrifying sores, that taint the Body, but affect not necessarily the heart, nor vitally endanger the Soul's everlasting state.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And when He (JESUS) Came to His Disciples, He Saw a great Multitude about them; and the Scribes questioning with them: and straightway all the People, when they beheld Him, were greatly amazed, and running to Him saluted Him. And He Asked the Scribes, "What question ye with them?" And One of the Multitude answered, and said, "MASTER, I have brought unto Thee my Son, which had a dumb Spirit: and wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him; and he foameth and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to Thy Disciples, that they should cast him out: and they could not." HE Answereth him, and Saith, "O faithless Generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I Suffer you? Bring him unto Me!" And they brought him unto Him: and when He Saw him, straightway the Spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming. And He Asked his Father, "How long is it ago since this came unto him?" And he said, "Of a Child: and oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him. But if Thou canst do any thing, have Compassion on us, and Help us!" JESUS Said unto him, "If thou canst believe, All Things are possible to him, that believeth." And straightway the Father of the Child cried out, and said with tears, "LORD, I believe, Help Thou mine unbelief!" When JESUS Saw that the People came running together, He Rebuked the foul Spirit, Saying unto him, "Thou dumb and deaf Spirit, I Charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him!" And the Spirit cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him; and he was as One dead; insomuch that Many said, "He is dead!" But JESUS Took him by the hand, and Lifted him up: and he arose.—Chap. ix, 14 to 27.*

In this more circumstantial detail, there is an additional feature of peculiar attractiveness in the prayer of the Parent to have his faith strengthened: he did not arrogate in Pharisaic haughtiness that his belief needed no Spiritual Aid to invigorate it; but in the meekness and humility becoming a Supplicant of The LORD of Life and Health and all Things, sought that fulness of faith, which

gives efficacy to prayer, because so Acceptable to The GOD of Mercy, Who Alone Heareth prayer.

St. Luke's account of It is thus: *And it came to pass, that on the next day, (after the Transfiguration,) when they were come down from the Hill, much People met JESUS. And, behold, a Man of the Company cried out, saying, "MASTER, I beseech Thee, Look upon my Son! for he is mine only Child; and lo, a Spirit taketh him; and he suddenly crieth out, and it teareth him that he foameth again; and bruising him hardly departeth from him. And I besought Thy Disciples to cast him out; and they could not."* And JESUS Answering, Said, "*O faithless and perverse Generation, how long shall I be with you? and Suffer you? Bring Thy Son hither!"* And as he was yet a coming, the Devil threw him down, and tare him. And JESUS Rebuked the unclean Spirit, and Healed the Child, and Delivered him again to his Father. And they were All amazed at the Mighty Power of GOD.—Chap. ix, 37 to 43.

Amidst a People so perverse, how mysterious is it that Such Beneficence as well as Forbearance should be Exerted by A GOD of Infinite Power!! Great as was the malady of the Child, and poignant as must have been the Parent's trial of feeling, it is only natural that they should, in every way, seek relief. But under the discouragement of the fruitless attempt of the Disciples of JESUS to administer it, there must have been the impulse of a lively faith to press through the Crowd, and fall prostrate at JESUS' Feet, and seek at His Hands, what, in the face of so mixed an Assembly he prayed to believe that He, and He Only, could Grant. Yet amid the fuller assurance of the Saving Efficacy of vital faith in The Self-Same JESUS, now Exalted to His Glories with His HEAVENLY FATHER, how many professing Christian Parents suffer their Children to fall into the fire of intemperance and sensuality, and into the turbid waters of contention and unhallowed propensities, without any persevering efforts to bring them unto CHRIST, Who Alone can Heal their disorders and Restore them to a right mind!

△ Then came the Disciples to JESUS apart, and said, "Why could not we cast him out?" And JESUS Said unto them, "Because of your unbelief! for Verily I Say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye shall say unto this Mountain, 'Remove hence to yonder Place!' and it shall remove: and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Howbeit this Kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.—19 to 21.

The littleness of the Disciples' faith, rather than the inveteracy of the disorder, it seems, occasioned the failure in their attempt to dispossess the evil Spirit. And so it is with too Many in this our day, who think that the Peculiar Providence of The ALMIGHTY hath been Withdrawn from the Earth: and though they put faith in Man for the removal of carnal maladies, yet have not vital faith in GOD, Who Created Man, and Who hath Avowed Himself to be The Great PHYSICIAN of Souls, so as earnestly and perseveringly to pray to Him to Root out the distempers and disorders that lay waste and ravage the Soul.

To JESUS, Who was so Gracious in His Communications of Mercies and Bounties, more especially to His Disciples, and Whose Object, in Taking upon Him the Condition of Man, was to Renew in Man the Likeness to GOD, by Cleansing him from all his impurities, and Filling his Soul with Sanctity, the little of zeal and the faintness of the faith of the Disciples could not but be a cause of painful Reflection and of just Reproof; though Delivered in That Spirit of Benevolence Inseparable from Him.

Here was an obvious Instance of The DIVINE Power in CHRIST, Manifested by a Comparison of What was the Instantaneous Effect of His Word,

when contrasted with the result of the Power Imparted by Him to His Disciples. Presuming too much on the Promised Gift of The SPIRIT, they had omitted the necessary preparation of the Soul, that of fervent prayer and holy abstinence, which would have obtained the Sanctioning and Confirming Aid of The ALMIGHTY.

Greater joy than this Parent received, whose long-suffering Child was thus Rescued from accumulated bodily ills, and rendered happy in himself and, perhaps, a Blessing to his Family, and a living Proof of The MESSIAH'S Advent, great as that joy must have been, was yet derived to the fond and confiding Father, whose prodigal Son was brought back, by bodily suffering, to the paths of soberness and filial piety, and transformed, by the power of Grace, to the exalted station of a Child of GOD.

Faith, manifested by works, is the true and genuine fruit of Christian principle; one is essentially and necessarily the consequence of the other: and faith, once heartily cherished, generates rapidly, disseminating far and wide its beneficial influence, and sweetening all around with the perfume of its charity.

The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous Man availeth much: and where the Soul is deeply and sincerely intent upon an object, it is so averse to interruption that bodily wants or cravings are checked or disregarded, and nothing is allowed to interfere with the holy Communion, in which it is engaged with its GOD. What almost Miracles might be wrought, if vital faith, thus fortified by prayer and fasting in the Spirit, inculcated by The GOD of all Power, and Who Heareth prayer, reigned within us. But, alas! weak as our mortal state is, what faculty is weaker in us than our faith? How many Souls torn and sore vexed by impiety and sensuality would, at the last hour of their existence here, when conscious of the awful approach of their dissolution, and of the Judgment Awaiting them, from Which there is no appeal, willingly pass a tenfold lengthened Life of pain and abstinence and prayer, to be relieved from the pangs of that eventful Hour, if so DIVINE Mercy would Will it to be.

To withdraw occasionally from the World, and to hold converse, in becoming humility, with GOD, is an employment that tends peculiarly to form the Soul for an imitation of the Great and Glorious Example of The Incarnate JESUS; and to prepare it for the purer and infinitely more Exalted Service of GOD in the Realms of Heavenly Holiness and Perfect Peace. The effect too of such conduct on Others, both Nationally and Individually, though not, perhaps, instantaneously or obviously apparent, may, nevertheless, be highly beneficial, by exhibiting the fruits of Grace as the effect of a holy faith, and may prompt them in the laudable inquiry after Truth, to go and do likewise, that their Souls may taste of Heavenly Peace, and their hearts be turned from the disobedience of the Foolish to the wisdom of the Just.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And when JESUS was Come into the house, His Disciples asked Him privately, "Why could not we cast him out?" And He Said unto them, "This Kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting."*—Chap. ix, 28, 29. On another occasion, as recorded by this same Evangelist on the incident of the sudden fading of the fruitless fig-tree, which our SAVIOUR had Condemned for its barrenness, and at which St. Peter expressed himself with surprise, JESUS Said, *"Have faith in GOD! For Verily I Say unto you, That Whosoever shall say unto this Mountain, 'Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the Sea!' and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things, which he saith, shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I Say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them."*—Chap. xi, 12, 13, 14. 20 to 24.

St. Luke also records the following as having been Said by our SAVIOUR

to His Disciples, on their urging Him to Increase their faith: "*If ye had faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, 'Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the Sea!' and it should obey you.*"—Chap. xvii, 5, 6.

The increase of our faith should be the object of our daily and hourly prayer, remembering that faith is among *the diversities of Gifts from The HOLY SPIRIT; All Which Manifestations of The SPIRIT are Given to every One of us to profit withal*: as wrote St. Paul to the Corinthians [1st, xii, 4. 7.] But the same Apostle admonishes, that great soever as may be the strength of our faith, it will only Acceptably manifest itself to GOD by being followed by the works of Christian charity: for in the same Epistle wrote the Apostle, *Though I have all faith, so that I could remove Mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.*—Chap. xiii, 2.

△ And while They abode in Galilee, JESUS Said unto them, "The SON of Man shall be Betrayed into the hands of Men: and they shall kill Him; and the third day He shall be Raised again." And they were exceeding sorry.—22, 23.

Our SAVIOUR seems repeatedly to have Forewarned His Disciples of the dreadful Death that awaited Him; and of the final Triumph He was to Obtain by His Early Resurrection from the grave, in defiance of all the Powers of Darkness and of Satan: but the Disciples, even to the moment of that Death and beyond it, received the Prophecy, not as they should have done with bursts of gratitude and reverential joy, but with unmixed grief and deprecation, sorrowing as for a separation from an Earthly Friend; unheeding the indispensable necessity and incalculable Value of the Sacrifice, so Freely Offered. The true and acceptable sorrow arising from the contemplation of the Sufferings of JESUS, as The SON of GOD, should work in the Soul a deeper sorrow from the consciousness of our own sins of commission and omission, which must have increased the Measure of our SAVIOUR'S Agony and Torture in their Expiation. See the observations on chapter xvi, 21 to 23. JESUS, to Soften in the Disciples' minds the distressing Tidings of His approaching Death by violence, always Accompanied the Foretelling of It with the Assurance that He would Rise again, and that shortly, and so Confirm the Truth of His Character, and Justify a reliance on His Word and Power.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And they departed thence, and passed through Galilee: and JESUS would not that any Man should know it: for He Taught His Disciples, and Said unto them, "The SON of Man is Delivered into the hands of Men; and they shall kill Him: and after that He is Killed, He shall Rise the third day."* But they understood not That Saying; and were afraid to ask Him.—Chap. ix, 30 to 32.

St. Luke's account is as follows: *While they wondered every One at All Things, Which JESUS Did, He Said unto His Disciples, "Let These Sayings sink down into your ears! for The SON of Man shall be Delivered into the hands of Men."* But they understood not This Saying, and It was hid from them, that they perceived It not: and they feared to ask Him of That Saying.—Chap. ix, 43 to 45.

And when They were come to Capernaum, they, that received tribute money, came to Peter, and said, "Doth not your Master pay tribute?" He saith, "Yes." And when he was come into the House, JESUS Prevented him, Saying, "What thinkest thou, Simon? Of whom do the Kings of the Earth take custom or tribute? of their own Children? or of Strangers?" Peter saith unto Him, "Of Strangers." JESUS Saith unto him, "Then are the Children free. Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the Sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for Me and thee."—24 to 27.

What an outrage to Justice, that He, Who Freely Gives us All Things that we enjoy, and Added to such numberless and unmerited Gifts even Himself, as An Expiatory Sacrifice for our sins and the sins of the whole World, to Save our Souls alive, (if we but heartily and thankfully accept The Offering,) should, when in the Very Progress towards Such Inestimable Sacrifice in His Sojourn upon Earth, be inhospitably called upon to Pay tribute. The Heathen Nations, as CHRIST Observed, raised their revenue by imposing taxes on the Strangers and Foreigners among them; thus freeing the Native Citizens from the burden of public pecuniary contributions: but JESUS, though of the Royal House and Lineage of David, Who Came to His Own, as PROPHET, PRIEST, and KING, was by His Own proudly and unnaturally Rejected, and Treated as a Stranger among them; and though so Destitute as not to have Where to Lay His Head, after Entering on His Gracious and Mighty Mission, had tribute to the exigencies of the State exacted from Him. The Meekness and Gentleness and Submissiveness of CHRIST, in thus, though Calmly Exposing its unreasonableness, Complying with the demand, Form a salutary Lesson for us to profit by, in the imitation of His Example, and in the adoption of His Principle, not only not to resist the Law of the Land in which we live, and to which we owe allegiance, but to contribute faithfully and readily, when called upon, our portions towards defraying the Public charges, whether National, Clerical, or Parochial. To defraud the Public revenue, or to withhold our contingent quota towards it, is by Many considered and even avowed to be justifiable: but CHRIST hath not so Taught All, who would learn of Him: and None can justly boast of a Christian Spirit, and of being upright in all their ways, who do not demean themselves in all their dealings, with true integrity of heart and hand, and an earnest desire to follow in every transaction of life, whether of a public or private nature, the dictates of Truth and Openness, from pure reverence and love to GOD as The FOUNTAIN of Truth, and in obedience to the Suggestions to the conscience from His HOLY SPIRIT; though it may seem at the moment as prejudicial to interest, in a worldly point of view. Indeed, rather than debase their Souls by falsehood or equivocation, which would be at once known to An All-Seeing and Omniscient CREATOR, they would sacrifice every possession and comfort in this Life, except hope in Another; and count the loss a gain, if compensated, as assuredly it would be, by an acquitting conscience and An Approving GOD.

Small, comparatively, as was the occasion of This Miracle of our SAVIOUR, yet was It perfectly in unison with His Characteristic Humility and Righteousness; Affording to those, made privy to it, a further corroborative Proof of The DIVINE Penetration and Power of Him, Who Wrought It. And is it not a justifiable ground of faith that He, to Whom the Depths of the Sea were Disclosed, and its hidden treasures Laid Open, was Himself The GOD, Who Created the Sea and All that therein is? But, alas! as with the Disciples of JESUS, and Companions of His Personal Presence when on Earth, so with Each of us, professing also to be His Followers, Faith hath much to do, ere it accomplisheth its perfect work! To us, who view This Wonder of DIVINE Con-



descension with our Spiritual eyes, and with the firmness of faith in the Righteousness of Him Who Worked It, the Instruction and Admonition are Afforded, Which should induce us to do justly, at all times; and, as much as lieth in us, to live peaceably with All.

It is remarkable that our SAVIOUR'S Perception of the thoughts and intents of His immediate Companions and Followers on this, as on other occasions, detailed in His History, had so little Influence upon them in the way of rousing them to that fulness of Faith in His DIVINE Nature, which should have attached them to Him by a tie so irresistible, that neither trial nor temptation, neither the fear of Human power, nor the efforts of Satanic deception could weaken. When Peter had his conversation with the Tribute Gatherer in the street or open air, JESUS was within a house: and when Peter went thither expressly to relate what had passed in private between him and the Officer, JESUS Prevented him; and by the Questions He Proposed to Peter, most clearly Shewed that He Knew, as well as Peter, the whole tenor of the conference.

St. Mark does not notice This Miracle, but mentions *JESUS Coming into Capernaum; and being in the House*: [Chap. ix, 33.] and then relates other Conversation between Him and His Disciples.

△ CHAP. xviii.—At the same time came the Disciples unto JESUS, saying, "Who is the Greatest in The KINGDOM of HEAVEN?" And JESUS Called a little Child unto Him, and Set him in the midst of them, and Said, "Verily I Say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little Children, ye shall not enter into The KINGDOM of HEAVEN. Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself as this little Child, the Same is Greatest in The KINGDOM of HEAVEN."—1 to 4.

Worldly thoughts and Worldly views seem occasionally to have actuated even the Disciples of JESUS: they were emulous of distinction, and would have carried the passion of emulation even into Heaven: the Meek and Lowly and Self-abasing and Disinterested Character of their Holy and Heavenly and Devoted MASTER had not upon their actions and thoughts the Influence that might have been desired or expected. The KINGDOM of HEAVEN they seem to have contemplated in comparison with a well-regulated Government upon Earth, having, subordinately to Its SUPREME HEAD, Officers, as it were, of various gradations, more or less advanced in the Blessings of the Favour of The ALMIGHTY, and consequently with shades of distinction amongst themselves; the inconsistency of which notion they might, had they been more Spiritually minded, have gathered from the Example as well as Precepts of their LORD and MASTER.

Of the innocence, the purity, the simplicity, the absence of all dissimulation, of all emulation, and ambition in The KINGDOM of HEAVEN, the condition of Man himself in the dawn of his being, and before corruption can have taken root in his heart, (as in the state of earliest Childhood, when incapable of actual sin and by baptism purified from original sin, through the Atoning Sacrifice of CHRIST,) presents the best resemblance.

The conversion of the heart from the ways and influence of the World, and even from that most seemingly natural and general passion of it for distinction amongst our Fellow-Mortals, unto the passive temper and humble aim and contented feelings of docile Infancy is essential, however difficult of acquirement, to the preparing and fitting the Soul for the Communion with Saints and Angels in Heaven: for There but one single-minded motive, the love and reverential fear of GOD, influences to action; and the Honour of GOD is sought for and rejoiced in, without One Spirit assuming to be more holy than Another; but All

concurring and delighting in the concert, of giving glory and worship to JEHOVAH and to The LAMB, That Sitteth upon the Throne.

Humility towards GOD is a consequence of a deep and persevering contemplation of His Nature, His Works, and His Revealed Word; and the truly Pious, (whatever be their station in life,) when thinking on the Wisdom and Mercy of their CREATOR, and reflecting on their own comparative nothingness and unworthiness in the Sight of That GOD, feel, with a just sense of the infinite debt of gratitude they owe Him, a consciousness of their own unfitness to discharge it; that they reject the thought of superior holiness beyond their Fellows, and are deeply and justly grateful, if their prayers and their praises be Received by The GOD, Who Judgeth the heart.

The Account given by St. Mark is as follows: *And JESUS Came to Capernaum; and being in the House, He Asked the Disciples, "What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way?" But they held their peace; for by the way they had disputed among themselves, "Who should be the greatest." And He Sat down and Called the Twelve, and Saith unto them, "If any Man desire to be first, the Same shall be last of All, and Servant of All." And He Took a Child, and Set him in the midst of them; and when He had Taken him in His Arms, He Said unto them, "Whosoever shall receive One of such Children in My Name, receiveth Me; and Whosoever shall receive Me, receiveth not Me, but Him That Sent Me."*—Chap. ix, 33, to 37.

St. Luke's narrative is thus: *Then there arose a reasoning among the Disciples, "Which of them should be Greatest." And JESUS, Perceiving the thought of their heart, Took a Child, and Set him by Him, and Said unto them, "Whosoever shall receive this Child in My Name, receiveth Me; and Whosoever shall receive Me, receiveth Him, That Sent Me: for he, that is least among you all, the Same shall be great."*—Chap. ix, 46 to 48. On an after occasion, as recorded by the same Evangelist, *there was a strife among the Disciples, "Which of them should be accounted the greatest?" And JESUS Said unto them, "The Kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they, that exercise authority upon them, are called Benefactors: But ye shall not be so; but he, that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he, that is Chief, as he that doth serve: for whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he, that sitteth at meat? But I am among you, as he that serveth."*—Chap. xxii, 24 to 27. In furtherance of which Doctrine St. Peter eventually, as a proof of Its Influence on his own heart, exhorted his Disciples *to lay aside envy, and, as new born Babies, to desire the sincere Milk of the Word, that Such, as had tasted that The LORD is Gracious, might grow Thereby.*—1 Peter ii, 1 to 3.

The holy Psalmist, amidst all his distinguishing acquirements, yet in the fervour of his piety disclaimed haughtiness of spirit, or a loftiness of look, saying, on the contrary, *Surely I have behaved and quieted myself as a Child, that is weaned of his Mother; my Soul is even as a weaned Child.*—Ps. cxxxi, 1, 2.

On another occasion our SAVIOUR, when Reasoning with Nicodemus, a Ruler among the Jews, who had come to JESUS to learn of Him as an acknowledged Teacher from GOD, Said to him, *"Except a Man be born again, he cannot see The KINGDOM of GOD: Except a Man be born of Water and of The SPIRIT, he cannot enter into The KINGDOM of GOD."*—John iii, 1 to 5.

St. James inculcates the same spirit of humility in matters relating to the Appointments of GOD, Who Giveth unto Every One severally as He Willeth; and the Apostle asks, *Do ye think that the Scripture [Ecc. iv, 4,] saith in vain, "The Spirit, that dwelleth in us, lusteth to envy?" But GOD Resisteth the Proud; and Giveth Grace to the Humble.* And this Apostolic admonition follows: *Submit yourselves therefore to GOD! humble yourselves in His Sight! and He shall Lift you up.*—James iv, 5 to 7. 10.

△ “And Whoso shall receive One such little Child, in My Name, receiveth Me.”—5.

To receive a Child in the sense of the Text, is to admit him, in idea and in desire, into the Same Promise of Salvation with ourselves; to look upon him as equally an Inheritor of The KINGDOM of HEAVEN, and to strive to mould our manners and disposition after the model of his artless simplicity and docility and innocence; and as Servants of CHRIST, and for His Glory, to sow in the heart and cultivate with assiduous care the seeds of a holy and consistent life; and which, growing in His Grace, and strengthening with His Strength, may bear fruit upwards, even unto Heavenly Regions; adorning with the Doctrine and Practice of true Believers the Election of GOD our SAVIOUR in all seasons and under all circumstances, This is to receive a Child of GOD, in the Name of GOD; and this is it to attain the sublimest Honour Man's nature is capable of, the receiving into the Soul and thoughts and heart GOD Himself, Who, in the Vastness of His Condescension, will, in The Person of His SON and in the Power of His SPIRIT, be Ever Ready and Desirous of Coming unto us, and to Counsel and Comfort us; and Who, if we entertain Him, as for our dearest interest it is our bounden duty to do, will finally Raise us up to dwell with Him in the Mansions of Eternal Glory and of Perfect Righteousness and Heavenly Peace.

See the observations on Chapter x, 42.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: “*Whosoever shall receive One of such Children in My Name, receiveth Me; and Whosoever shall receive Me, receiveth not Me, but Him That Sent Me.*”—Chap. ix, 37.

St. Luke's is thus: *JESUS Said unto the Disciples, “Whosoever shall receive this Child in My Name, receiveth Me; and Whosoever shall receive Me, receiveth Him, That Sent Me: for he, that is least among you all, the Same shall be great.”*—Chap. ix, 48.

It is through Spiritual gentleness and meekness and humility, after the Example of CHRIST, that Man will become great in The KINGDOM of HEAVEN.

“But Whoso shall offend One of these little Ones, which believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck; and that he were drowned in the depth of the Sea.”—6.

Whoever shall seek to seduce a Child to stray from the faith of CHRIST, into which he hath been baptized, will, thereby, be guilty of a most heinous offence against The SON of GOD; and, for the sake of his Soul's interest, had better have been previously consigned to a premature and calamitous death; so that, being cut off from all further intercourse with this World and the things thereof, the measure of his iniquity may not have been full to the overflowing; and all hope of Redemption through CHRIST may not have been taken from him. But if, when appearing at the Bar of DIVINE Justice, so crying and hateful a sin, as the perverting of Youth from the ways of innocence and truth and righteousness, should be laid to the charge of a Soul, by whose baneful influence the Spirit of that Child has been drawn from the love and service of its GOD to the ways of the Destroyer and the paths of immorality and infidelity, all hope of Pardon and Acceptance from GOD must be sunk in despair, and no gleam of Mercy can justifiably be sought from the SUN of RIGHTEOUSNESS. To convert a Babe in CHRIST unto a Son of Perdition, and to destroy him, whom The SON of GOD Came down from Heaven by the Sacrifice of Himself to Save, how awful is the responsibility of such a conduct; and yet how wide-spreading is the evil of the neglect, if not the perversion of Youth!

St. Mark's account of our SAVIOUR'S Further Saying, is as follows: “*Whosoever shall offend One of these little Ones, that believe in Me, it is better for*

*'m that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the Sea.'—hap. ix, 42.*

St. Luke's narrative is as follows: *Then Said JESUS unto the Disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come; but woe unto him, through whom they come; it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the Sea, than that he should offend One of these little Ones.'—hap. xvii, 1, 2.*

Woe unto the World because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that Man, by whom the offence cometh! Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee! it is better for thee to enter into Life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into everlasting Fire. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee! it is better for thee to enter into Life with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into Hell Fire."—7 to 9.

Death came by sin; and by sin also came sorrow and suffering. The human Soul, Destined by its CREATOR for perfect purity and purest happiness, forfeited, by transgression against its MAKER'S Law, His Favour, and with that Favour its own truest peace. For joy and inward and lasting delight are inseparable from DIVINE Favour, and are no where to be found without It. But His Countenance be Turned away from us in Displeasure, by reason of our offences, the Soul experiences a restless, listless, hopeless, cheerless feeling; and a reflection, chides itself for its wilful and perverse departure from its own solid happiness; yet has not fortitude or self-control enough to change its course from darkness to light. Offences must needs come, whilst the allurements of sin, and the evil passions it engenders are unresisted and yielded to; and a regardlessness by degrees is daringly professed to the consequences of sin, both as involving the Souls of Others, and the everlasting Destiny of the Soul that sinneth, and that seeks to draw Others into the same vortex of dissipation, and defiance to the Laws both of GOD and Man. But offences thus coming through the pride and arrogance and sensuality of Man, by his own spontaneous act and choice, however Discountenanced and Discouraged by the Warnings of GOD, and the chidings of conscience, are yet often rendered subservient to the trial and probation of Those, who, through much tribulation, enter into The KINGDOM of HEAVEN. Still the Offender, thus rendered by the Wisdom of GOD contributory to His Ways of Benevolence and Mercy, is not, therefore, so less culpable; but Self-condemnation as well as retributive Punishment, shall, in the end, overtake him, when the measure of his iniquity is full; and when the Resistless and Tremendous Vengeance of The ALMIGHTY shall be poured out upon him; and Woe, Woe, Woe, will be his bitter portion for ever!

The same figurative Reasoning was before Used by our SAVIOUR. [See chapter v, 29, 30, and the observations there introduced.]

As in the days of the Apostles, according to the awful description of St. Jude, so has it unhappily been in all after ages, and even still is. St. Jude, when writing of the common Salvation, and exhorting to the earnestly contending for the Faith Delivered unto the Saints, said, "There were certain Men crept in unawares, who were ungodly Men, turning the Grace of our GOD into lasciviousness; and denying The Only LORD GOD, and our LORD JESUS CHRIST."—3, 4.

St. Mark's narrative of our SAVIOUR'S Continued Discourse is thus: *If thy hand offend thee, cut it off! it is better for thee to enter into Life maimed, than, having two hands, to go into Hell; into the Fire, that never shall be quenched; here their worm dieth not, and the Fire is not quenched. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off! it is better for thee to enter halt into Life, than having two feet, to be cast*


*into Hell; into the Fire that never shall be quenched, where their worm dieth not, and the Fire is not quenched. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out! it is better for thee to enter into The KINGDOM of GOD with one eye, than, having two eyes, to be cast into Hell Fire; where their worm dieth not, and the Fire is not quenched. For every One shall be salted with fire; and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt: salt is good; but if the salt have lost his saltiness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves; and have peace One with Another!*"—Chap. ix, 43 to 50.

Let no member of our bodies be made the servant of sin, nor become the occasion of evil unto Others of our Fellow-Creatures! but may we, on the contrary, seek the Salvation of Others, that the Peace of GOD may be with us in time, and in Eternity, through the Love of CHRIST JESUS. *For what is a Man advantaged, if he gain the whole World, and the false pleasures thereof; yet lose his own Soul, and be cast away at last?*—Luke ix, 25. *Let us labour, therefore, by adopting the Faith of CHRIST, in the love of It, to enter into That Rest, Which is Prepared for the People of GOD!*—Heb. iv, 9 to 11.

△ "Take heed that ye despise not One of these little Ones! for I Say unto you, That in Heaven their Angels do always behold the Face of My FATHER, Which is in Heaven."—10.

To despise a Child, which from its innocence after its Purification by Baptism is an emblem of the purity of the Spiritual State, is to despise the noblest Work of GOD, a Creature of His Own Adoption: and, thereby, to hold in derision or lightly to esteem The HOLY ONE on HIGH, to Whom Innocence and Simplicity are peculiarly Acceptable. But so to despise them as to seek to subvert their title to an Inheritance in the Realms of Heavenly Purity and Peace and Everlasting Joy, through the Love and Merits of their REDEEMER, by corrupting their innocence and winning them to transgression and the service of Sin and Satan, is deeply to offend The ALMIGHTY, and to subvert the Purposes of His FATHERLY Affection: and assuredly the Souls of Such, so lost through the example or incitement of Others, will rise up in awful accusation against them at the Great Day of Retribution on the Coming of The LORD to Judgment; a Day, which None shall be able to abide without the Support of His Mercies. What the meaning of the expression, "the Angels of little Children do behold The HEAVENLY FATHER'S Face," may be, admits of doubt: that every Soul of Man, from the first hour of its birth, had Appointed to wait upon it, in all its progress through Life, a Guardian Angel to watch over its movements and intercede for its Protection, is hardly admissible: perhaps, it may be that the Souls of Children, when removed from Earth by the surrender of their Spirit in a state of innocency and of incapacity to offend, (which Gracious Translation was One of the Great Purchases Made at the Price of CHRIST'S Incarnation and Obedience and Sufferings unto Death,) are at once Wafted into the Heavenly Regions, into the visual Presence of their GOD and FATHER. The idea of the Children of Earth having guardian Angels in Heaven, should hardly seem supportable, when we acknowledge the Universality of The HOLY SPIRIT'S Influence, and admit that That Influence Pervades the Human Soul, and as One Effect of CHRIST'S Intercession and the First Fruits of His Offering, Abounds in All, who do not resist or so reject as finally to quench It; and which Infancy is incapable of doing. It is true that the Writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, alluding to a Passage in Psalm ciii, 20, 21, Prophetic of The DIVINITY of JESUS, after drawing a Comparison between CHRIST and the Angels, speaks of the Latter, as *ministering Spirits Sent forth to minister for them who shall be Heirs of Salvation.*—Heb. i, 14. Repeated instances also are given

throughout the Old Testament, and occasionally some in the New, of the appearance on Earth of Angels or Supernatural Beings; but generally, if not universally, they seem to have been Sent by The FATHER of Spirits on His Especial Embassies: and the continued connection of these superior and Celestial Beings with Man, in his fallen and unhallowed and unregenerate state, is still amongst the Mysteries and Hidden Things of GOD: nor does its being veiled from Man for a time, prejudice his means of Salvation; since the full Light of the Gospel now Shineth upon him, and the Guidance of The HOLY SPIRIT is ever Yielded to his prayers.

“For The SON of Man is Come to Save That, Which was lost.”—11. 

Man, in his original creation, was Made so pure, as to be enabled to hold consocious and continual converse with GOD, every thought of his heart being fostered in piety, directed by prudence, and consummated in wisdom: the bliss he experienced was therefore perfect; and all his ways were pleasantness, and all his paths were peace. Being constituted a free Agent, and intended even for a more exalted State of Purity and Happiness, it was necessary, or at least reasonable, that some test of his unvarying and willing obedience and devotedness to GOD (from Whom all this Portion of inestimable Good, without money and without price, had Flowed in upon him,) should be given; and the least possible one, that of restraining unjustifiable curiosity was in Mercy Prescribed as the condition of preserving The DIVINE Favour for ever. From presumption in his own judgment, and yielding to the first suggestions of evil, fostered by the Fiend of iniquity, the Commandment of The LORD was set at nought, and the Condition Proposed by Him was broken: hence Man forfeited the Favour of GOD, and lost, with It, the Blessings of Paradise and his Soul's peaceful Communion with JEHOVAH; the Glory of Whose Visual Presence, and the Brightness of Whose Countenance were Withdrawn from him; and his understanding became darkened and utterly unfitted for the Habitations of Holiness. Thus left to himself, evil gradually assumed the almost entire ascendancy over him; and when, in the language of Man, GOD Looked from Heaven upon the Earth, to See if there was Any that was good, or understood their relationship to Him, He Found not One! Helpless and hopeless, without the power of atoning for past offences, or the capacity of avoiding future ones, from the force and influence of evil habits over the Soul, Man, in challenging the Justice of GOD, had separated himself from all reasonable expectation of Mercy at His Hands: and GOD could not, Consistently with His Exalted Attribute of Truth, Give him the Prize of his High Calling to Holiness and Heaven in an Eternity of Existence. In this dreadful prospect of impending Fate over Man, the Unsearchable Wisdom and Unmeasured Love of GOD Found out the Only Ransom for sin, and the Only Means of Reconciliation to DIVINE Favour by The Only SON of GOD, The Second PERSON in The Ever Blessed TRINITY, Taking upon Himself Man's Nature, Submitting to its weakness and infirmities, and, amidst Temptation and Trial and Suffering, even unto a painful and ignominious Death, Presenting that Nature Perfect both in Purity and Holiness: thus in His Body Bearing the Punishment of the guilt of all Ages of the World, and Opening, through the gates of Death, by His Own Resurrection, the Door of Heavenly hope to all Believers. Thus did *The SON of Man Come to Save That, Which was lost.*

On another occasion our SAVIOUR Gave forth, virtually, the Same Encouraging Assurance, when He Said, “*The SON of Man is not Come to Destroy Men's Lives; but to Save them.*”—Luke ix, 56. So in the Gracious Conference

with Zaccheus, "*The SON of Man is Come to Seek and to Save That, Which was lost.*"—Luke xix, 10. The same Stream of Heavenly Consolation He Poured forth, when Reasoning with Nicodemus, Saying, "*GOD so Loved the World, that He Gave His Only Begotten SON, that Whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have Everlasting Life: for GOD Sent not His SON into the World to Condemn the World; but that the World, through Him, might be Saved.*"—John iii, 16, 17. So at another time JESUS Said, "*I Came not to Judge the World, but to Save the World.*"—Chap. xii, 47.

△ "How think ye? If a Man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the Mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? And if so be that he find it, Verily I Say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine, which went not astray. Even so it is not the Will of your FATHER, Which is in Heaven, that One of these little Ones should perish."—12 to 14.

The description given by St. Luke of this Parable of our SAVIOUR, as Delivered by Him to the Pharisees and Scribes on their murmuring at His Associating with Publicans and Sinners, is thus: "*What Man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the Wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? and when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing; and when he cometh home, he calleth together his Friends and Neighbours, saying unto them, 'Rejoice with me! for I have found my sheep which was lost.'* I Say unto you, that likewise Joy shall be in Heaven over one Sinner, that repenteth; more than over ninety and nine just Persons, which need no repentance."—Chap. xv, 3 to 7.

The statement in Both is calculated to illustrate the Desire that The Almighty FATHER of the Universe ~~and~~ <sup>and</sup> The Great SHEPHERD of Israel has to Save the Souls of Mankind; which but for His Merciful Interposition must inevitably be eternally lost to all hope of Heavenly Felicity. And to All does He Extend His Vigilance and Care: but there are Some, who, through pride and presumption in their own merits, affect to be the peculiar Sheep of His Fold; yet they neglect to attend, in the spirit of a humble and tractable mind, to the Voice of That SHEPHERD: and though daringly asserting that they alone are entitled to feed in His Pastures, in reality are None of His; nor do they stay Therein, but wander perversely into the Wilderness of their own imaginations; and will not return to that peaceful Fold, to Which CHRIST Unceasingly Invites them; and in Which alone is Salvation found. *Just Persons, who need no repentance*, must mean those Self-esteemed Righteous, who disclaim the necessity of A REDEEMER, and challenge the Judgment of GOD upon their Lives and conversation as pure in His Sight; wilfully forgetting that in His Sight shall no Man living be justified. All have, indeed, gone astray; and though The LORD hath Laid on CHRIST the iniquity of us All, yet the Effect of His Redeeming Love, and the Joy consequent Thereon, even to the Angels in Heaven, can have reference only to Those, that have faith Therein and gratitude Thereby. We are thus Taught a Truth of the highest moment to our peace here, and to our hope of Pardon and of Peace Hereafter, that The Great GOD of Heaven, The MOST HOLY and The MOST HIGH, not only Humbleth Himself to Behold the Things, that are on Earth; but that where any Individual amongst the Race of fallen and polluted Man, leaves the Path, that alone leads unto Eternal Life, He Stretcheth forth His Mighty Arm in Mercy to Save him from impending and interminable ruin, and to Bring him back to the ways of Safety and Righteousness and Holy Love; and if he yield to so Goodly a Guidance, All the Host of Heaven rejoice in the Great and Gracious Deliverance of a Soul

from Hell, and in its Promised Communion with their Holy Bliss. This Truth we should cherish in meekness, tremblingly alive to the danger of not truly and from the heart following the Voice of The SHEPHERD and BISHOP of Souls. or does it become us to arrogate Salvation as our Lot, to the exclusion of others: for it is The LORD Only, That Looketh on the heart, and Knoweth them, that are His.

The "Little Ones," may equally apply to the infancy and weakness of Faith, of years: for over Both is the Shadowing Wing of The ALMIGHTY in Mercy Extended, and He Willeth that All, who, in the gentleness of a submissive Child, will come unto Him, shall find peace and rest unto their Souls.

Moreover, if thy Brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone! If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy Brother. But, if he will not hear thee, then take with thee One or Two more, that in the mouth of two or three Witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church! But if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an Heathen Man, and a Publican!—15 to 17.

The term "Brother" is, in Scripture Language, often, as here, to be understood, not as confined to Natural Kindred, but to embrace All united by the same Human tie, and especially Such as are bound together in the same bond of Christian Faith, having the same aim and the same end in view, namely, Salvation unto Eternal Life and Heavenly Blessedness, through a grateful and confiding dependence on The FATHER of Mercies in CHRIST JESUS. As, therefore, from a consciousness of our own manifold and great offences against The GOD and FATHER of us All, we cannot but be sensible of the need in which we stand for Pardon and Reconciliation, and should acknowledge the Unmeasured Love of His Only SON, in Sacrificing Himself to Propitiate our Forgiveness; and as we must seek, from the conviction of Its necessity, the Assistance of DIVINE Grace to the reformation of our own conduct, so should we strive, by prayer, to receive Its Influence so Operative within us, that Christian love and charity may abound in our hearts; and that in so doing we may follow, from the impulse of inclination, as well as of duty, the course of tenderness and compassionate consideration so beneficially Pointed out in This Precept, and Illustrated universally in the Life of CHRIST: striving by all means to reclaim them, that are on the brink of Spiritual ruin; beginning by the gracious office of friendly remonstrance and private exhortation; since with Many that course may be effectual, and the sin of public exposure or infamy may be spared them. Thus may all the good be effected that could be obtained, and that by the best of means; and to ourselves we shall have bound our Brother in a bond of gratitude and affection, lasting as Life.

Even by the Levitical Law it was thus Commanded: *Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy Neighbour, and not suffer him upon him. Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the Children of thy People: but thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thyself.*—Lev. xix, 17, 18.

The wise Son of Sirach's admonition is of a similar tendency: *Rehearse not to Another that which is told unto thee; and thou shalt fare never the worse! Whether it be to a Friend or Foe, talk not of other Men's Lives; and if thou canst, without offence, reveal them not! Admonish a Friend, it may be he hath not done; and if he have done it, that he do it no more! Admonish thy Friend, it may be he hath not said it; and, if he have, that he speak it not again! Admonish a friend; for many times it is a slander; and believe not every tale! Admonish thy neighbour before thou threaten him; and not being angry, give place to the Law of the MOST HIGH!*—Ecclus. xix, 7, 8. 13. 15. 17.



The consequence of such gracious and compassionate interference, is beautifully represented by the Apostle St. James in the Epistle addressed by him to the Christian Converts in general, wherein he says, *Brethren, if Any of you do err from the Truth, and One convert him, let him know, that he, which converteth the Sinner from the error of his way, shall save a Soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.*—Chap. v, 19, 20. And St. Peter points out the advantageous effects, which may result from the influence of good example, where exhortation, whether private or public, may have been in vain; and which, though expressly said of Wives, may equally, in spirit, apply to other Relations, whether of one Sex or the other, and whether high or low, rich or poor; All having influence in a greater or less degree in their respective spheres or circles of action. *If Any obey not the Word, seek to win them by your chaste conversation!*—1 Peter iii, 1, 2.


By the Mosaic Law it was provided that *at the mouth of two Witnesses, or three Witnesses, shall he, that is worthy of death, be put to death: but at the mouth of one Witness he shall not be put to death.*—Deut. xvii, 6. And on the same principle the Merciful Dispensation of the Law of CHRIST Proceeded; for He would not Suffer the conduct of any of Those, professing His Religion, to be publicly exposed, and their character, consequently, sacrificed, until two or three Witnesses could bear testimony to the most pious and Brotherly or Sisterly exertions having been privately and admonishingly made, however in vain, to effectuate a conversion. In another Passage of the same Jewish Ordinance it is enjoined, *that one Witness shall not rise up against a Man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two Witnesses, or at the mouth of three Witnesses shall the matter be established.*—Deut. xix, 15.

How Compassionately and Considerately Progressive are the Exertions of Mercy; and thus is it seen, that The LORD not only Willeth not the death of a Sinner; and had rather that he should turn from the evil of his ways and live; but that every effort, which the tenderest and most humane feeling could suggest, and in a manner the most accommodating to the temper and disposition of a Wanderer from the ways of piety and purity, should be made by us, as the Appointed Instruments of DIVINE Mercy, ere a Fellow-Creature be abandoned by us as without hope of conversion and amendment, and as altogether reprobate. But, wonderful as it may seem to All sentient Beings but Man, there are Some, alas! how many! who are utterly irreclaimable, preferring the darkness to light, and rejecting all Human and DIVINE Exertions towards rescuing them from Condemnation unto Endless Punishment and Woe. Against Such the Apostle of the Gentiles has also cautioned us to be prepared, and eventually to withdraw ourselves from all intercourse with them, saying, *I beseech you, Brethren, mark them, which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the Doctrine Which ye have learned; and avoid them! for they, that are such, serve not our LORD JESUS CHRIST, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the Simple.*—Rom. xvi, 17, 18. And in writing to the Thessalonian Converts, the same Apostle said, *Now, we command you, Brethren, in the Name of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, that ye withdraw yourselves from every Brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the Tradition which he received of us. If any Man obey not our word by this Epistle, note that Man: and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed: yet count him not as an Enemy, but admonish him as a Brother!*—2 Thess. iii, 6, 14, 15. And St. John writes, *Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the Doctrine of CHRIST, hath not GOD. If there come Any unto you, and bring not This Doctrine, receive him not into your house; neither bid him "GOD Speed!"*—2 John 9, 10.

The course pointed out in the Text, by admonition and friendly remon-

strance to seek to recover an Immortal Soul, wandering in Self-willedness from the Way of Salvation, admirable as it is, yet is not by any means adequately put in practice. The occasions on which the power and authority of the Church's reproof and salutary chastisement might be exercised, after an experiment and failure of friendly and Brotherly interposition, very frequently arise; but through laxity of true Christian principles, and a mistaken delicacy, which from an unwise and unkind deference to private feelings and social attachments, sacrifices to them the everlasting interest of the Soul, they are not taken advantage of; neither is there such a boundary habitually fixed in Men's minds between those that serve GOD, and those who serve Him not, as should obtain, and, as in the spirit of perfect Christian love, is desired. Distinctions are uncharitably observed, and jealousies and divisions fostered between Individuals professing Christianity; but varying in the modes of evincing their faith in matters not of vital importance, where no such prejudices should be suffered to have influence, since the Honour of GOD, instead of being advanced by the number and cordiality of His Votaries, is thus restrained by the schisms amongst His professing Servants, and from their mutual jealousies and unwillingness to sympathise and communicate together; though they hesitate not to keep company with Infidels and Sinners.

St. Luke's narrative of our SAVIOUR'S Injunction is thus: "*Take heed to yourselves! If thy Brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him! And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, 'I repent!' thou shalt forgive him.*"—Chap. xvii, 3, 4.

"Verily I Say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on Earth shall be Bound in Heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on Earth shall be Loosed in Heaven."—18. 

See the observations on the passage parallel to the Text at Chapter xvi, 19.

Upon an after Occasion, between His Resurrection and Ascension, after having Breathed on the Assembly of Disciples The HOLY GHOST, our SAVIOUR Said unto them, generally, "*Whose soever sins ye remit, they are Remitted unto them; and Whose soever sins ye retain, they are Retained.*"—John xx, 23.

"Again I Say unto you, That if Two of you shall agree on Earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be Done for them of My FATHER, Which is in Heaven: for where Two or Three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the Midst of them."—19, 20.

The concurring and accordant and harmonious Ministry of CHRIST'S Disciples was thus indirectly Admonished and Encouraged; for the Blessing of The LORD, in an Especial Degree, was thus Declared to be Attendant on such a Communion and Fellowship in Holiness. And the same Spiritual Union adopted and persevered in, in these our times, though less Miraculously Gifted, will insure The DIVINE Countenance, as far as is essential to the Confirmation of that bond of Peace, and the Acquirement of those Spiritual Blessings in ourselves, in our Families, in our Neighbourhood, and in our Country, which fulness of faith and fervency in prayer can, and alone can obtain. And for this we have the confirmatory declaration of our SAVIOUR'S Favourite Disciple St. John, who, after exhorting to faith in the Name of The SON of GOD, said, *And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask any thing according to His Will, He Heareth us: and if we know that He Hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him.*—1 John v, 13 to 15.

The Universality and Ubiquity of The ALMIGHTY, Render it impossible that He, Who is SPIRIT, not Matter, should be Absent from or Present to one

Place more than another; when, therefore, He Says that He is in the Midst of them, that heartily pray unto Him, and who, if only two or three in number, are gathered together in His Name, He obviously Means His Favourable Disposition is Present with them, to Do unto them whatsoever in the meekness and confidence of Christian devotion they may venture to supplicate; asking in faith, and nothing wavering. And this Consolatory Assurance we have the privilege and satisfaction to know is not confined to the time, or place, or Persons at which and by whom it was Uttered, but is essential and vitally an inherent property of Christianity, growing with its growth, and strengthening with its strength: and, therefore, we need only concern ourselves to make our meetings for the professed Honour and Worship of GOD the result of our taking sweet counsel together in our way to His House of Prayer, that the petitions we pour forth, and the spirit with which they are offered up, may be such as in His Gracious Mercy may be Acceptable unto Him: for then will He assuredly be A Very Present Help in our every time of need, and CHRIST Himself, Who was once Present in the Flesh to Work out Salvation and Sanctification, will, in SPIRIT, be with us to Fulfil all our Petitions, and to Bless us with His Promised Peace.

△ Then came Peter to Him, and said, "LORD! how oft shall my Brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?" JESUS Saith unto him, "I Say not unto thee, Until seven times; but, Until seventy times seven."—21, 22.

St. Peter seems to have been peculiarly forward in inquiries of His Gracious MASTER respecting His Principles and Doctrines, in points of difficult or doubtful tendency. Forgiveness of injuries was one of the distinguishing features of the Religion that CHRIST Inculcated and Exemplified (see Chapter vi, 14, and the observations there). But St. Peter, reflecting on the principle generally, considered that it must have some bound and limit, or otherwise by impunity and passiveness, imposition and oppression would prevail uncontrolled, and evil would result from too merciful and forbearing a disposition. He asked, therefore, what number of times should be the utmost through which forgiveness and perfect reconciliation should be extended: and then the Apostle himself suggested seven; being the number, which on another occasion, as lately quoted from St. Luke, our SAVIOUR had Mentioned, as even in one day to be the least measure of forgiveness. [Chap. xvii, 3, 4.] The Answer Given to Peter was in the true Spirit of A SAVIOUR'S Love and Benevolence towards our Race, and perfectly in Character with the full Stream of Mercy continually Flowing from The GODHEAD, The FOUNTAIN of Goodness. As Man offends his Almighty MAKER and Sovereign LORD in every day of his life, and, in every hour of each day, by omission of duty, if not commissions of evil, in thought, word, or deed, and yet has Pardon Dealt out to him on the pre-condition of contrition and a hearty desire of amendment, resting for the Acceptance of the First on the Full Sufficient Sacrifice Offered up in Expiation of Man's offences by CHRIST Himself; and for the efficacy of the Second, on the Striving, Healing, Enlightening, Animating, and Purifying Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT: so in the return made for injuries done by one Person to Another, (and which are altogether as nothing in comparison with our transgressions against An Omnipotent GOD, our CREATOR, REDEEMER, and SANCTIFIER, in Whom we live, and move, and have our being, and to Whom, therefore, in becoming devotion to His Will and Pleasure, every faculty and power of our Souls and Bodies in every instant of our Lives should rightfully be dedicated,) we should think of the Mercy we shall stand in need of, at the Bar of DIVINE Justice, to Save our Souls from the Just Displeasure of A Pure and Holy GOD: and, so far from being disposed to visit severity in our own judgment on the conduct of

thers towards ourselves, though they may have acted ungratefully or unjustly towards us, more especially on their manifesting a sincere sorrow for their findings, we should glory in the opportunity of shewing mercy and forbearance; knowing that in so doing we follow the Gracious Example of A GOD of mercy, though of Holiness. A devout and humble Christian on minutely and undidly examining himself and dissecting his own heart, will find so much within himself that needs Forgiveness from The Great SEARCHER of hearts, that he will have no inclination or spirit to condemn hastily or harshly the misdoings of Others; and will rejoice at every opportunity of meeting contrition and supplication for pardon with forgiveness and restoration to favour. His own offences against The AUTHOR of his Being, and to the imminent hazard of his Soul's Eternal Interest, will be the paramount subject of his severest censure: and even if reproof escape him at the injuries inflicted on him by his Fellow-creatures in this fleeting moment of existence here below, it will be from the called and Christian motive to influence to a repentance not to be repented of; and to a departure from the paths of the Destroyer of Souls and turning, in witness of Spiritual Life, unto the ways of Godliness and honesty. With such an unceasing impulse of Brotherly love towards the Souls of Others, and with a disposition so truly charitable, who shall fix a limit to their exercise in the office of forgiveness towards an offending but repenting Fellow-Creature, or refuse to allow after that Attribute of Peculiar Loveliness in The DIVINE Character, mercy? [See the observations on Chapter vi, 14, 15.] To give efficacy to our prayers for our own Pardon, we should ever accompany them with a spirit of forgiveness and compassion towards Others; according to our SAVIOUR'S admonition, "*When ye stand praying, Forgive! if ye have ought against Any; as your FATHER also, Which is in Heaven, may Forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your FATHER, Which is in Heaven, Forgive us our trespasses.*"—Mark xi, 25, 26.

The exhortation by St. Paul is in his Heavenly MASTER'S Spirit: *Put on, as the Elect of GOD, Holy and Beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long suffering; forbearing One Another, and forgiving One another; if Any have a quarrel against Any: even as CHRIST Forgave you, so so do ye!*—Col. iii, 12, 13.

Therefore is The KINGDOM of HEAVEN Likened unto a certain King, which would take account of his Servants: and when he had began to reckon, One was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents: but forasmuch as he had not to pay, his Lord commanded him to be sold, and his Wife and Children, and all that he had; and payment to be made. The Servant, therefore, fell down, and worshipped him, saying, 'Lord, have patience with me! and I will pay thee all.' Then the Lord of that Servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt. But the same Servant went out, and found One of his Fellow-Servants which owed him an hundred pence; and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, 'Pay me that thou owest!' And his Fellow-Servant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, 'Have patience with me; and I will pay thee all!' And he would not, but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. So when his Fellow-Servants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their Lord all that was done. Then his Lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, 'O thou wicked Servant, I forgave thee all that debt because thou desiredst me: shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy Fellow-Servant, even as I had pity on thee?' And his Lord was wroth, and delivered him to the Tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall My Heavenly FATHER Do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every One his Brother their trespasses."—23 to 35.

This is a lively and forcible Illustration of the magnitude of Man's debt of obligation for GOD'S Mercies and Forgivenesses Vouchsafed to the Penitent and

Believing, for offences accumulating almost with every hour of existence; and the comparative utter insignificance of the injuries, which Man can receive from Others; and, consequently, how rich must be the exchange of obtaining for such a ready pardon of Others, which should be cheerfully extended, the Forgiveness and Favour of GOD! A King, as GOD'S Vice-Gerent, who is the Fountain of Honour, and on the wisdom of whose Government the prosperity of the Nation, Humanly speaking, depends, to whom, for the general weal, the dutiful return of tribute and of service should be faithfully and zealously made, is yet as the Fountain of Mercy peculiarly exalted in his Subjects' estimation, when under seemingly justifiable circumstances pardon is substituted for punishment. But where the experience of Royal mercy produces no corresponding feeling on a callous and ungenerous and ungrateful heart, its recall might seem justifiable. The right of a Creditor, according to the Jewish practice, extended to the person not only of the Debtor but to those of his Wife and Children, as was instanced by the fears of the Woman who sought assistance from Elisha, under the representation that *the Creditor of her Husband, who was dead, was come to take unto him her two Sons to be Bond-Men.*—2 Kings iv, 1. So also it seems to have been not unusual for the Jews to sell their own Children, or subject them to bondage for their Parents' debts; for on being expostulated with by the Prophet Nehemiah on that account, it is recorded of them that they said, *We bring into bondage our Sons and our Daughters to be Servants, and Some of our Daughters are brought unto bondage already; neither is it in our power to redeem them; for other Men have our lands and vineyards.*—Nch. v, 5.

This is an example of the meanness as well as folly of Man, who walketh not uprightly, nor seeketh the truth from his heart. Until the Vengeance of The ALMIGHTY is visibly Suspended over him, he weakly imagines that GOD doth not Behold his iniquity, and that The MOST HIGH doth not Stoop to Regard it; he, therefore, strengtheneth himself in his own wickedness: but when the Arrow of DIVINE Chastisement is Ready on the String, and he sees It Pointed at his breast; then terror-struck he shrinks from the threatened Fate, and, in all the seeming sincerity of humility and contrition, acknowledges his offences and the Justice of his Sentence; and with all the powers of his Soul implores the Clemency and Pardon of GOD.

The supplication in the Text was only for Forbearance by the having time afforded to pay the debt, great as indeed it was: but in the boundless liberality of a gracious and beneficent King the whole debt was at once forgiven. And, indeed, great as such liberality is by Man esteemed to be, what a feeble image does it present of the Boundless Love and Bounteous Providence and Ceaseless Care of GOD, and Who, on the easy and even joy-inspiring offering of repentance and faith in CHRIST as The MEDIATOR between GOD and Man, and by future obedience to The DIVINE Commandments, not only Speaks Pardon to the Soul for all of past transgression, but Adds the Sustaining and Consoling Assurance that Peace and Joy in Purity and Perfect Holiness await it in Higher Union and in Endless Being.

△ Did Man rightly estimate the debt of gratitude he owes his MAKER, and which increases with every moment of existence, and which Eternity will only magnify, how could he withhold tenderness and forbearance from his Fellow-Mortal, or find in his heart to exact rigidly what is due, beyond the means of Others to repay without the most distressing sacrifices: on the contrary, in the consciousness of his own utter inability to render any suitable return for the Inestimable Blessings of Creation, Redemption, and Sanctification, and the incalculable Benefits Attendant on Each Dispensation, he would rejoice in the opportunity of following the Example of Such A GIVER of all Good, and Such

A FATHER of Mercies; and, having so Received, would both freely give and forgive. And it is difficult to conceive how any reasonable hope of GOD'S Eternal Favour can be entertained, where there is not a heart prone to forgive the debts and trespasses, the offences and ingratitude of Others, and to visit their infirmities and perversities with tenderness and compassion.

What is it that Man can owe to Man, that Man owes not in a measure of a thousand-fold capacity to his MAKER: for the whole Earth is The LORD'S, and the Fulness thereof. The severity of inexorable justice does not, therefore, become Man, and its exercise is an act of the most unwise policy; for though payment of a debt may, by that means, be enforced, yet must there arise, on reflection, and particularly in reference to The DIVINE Dealings with every One of us, an inward feeling of Self-condemnation, inseparable from a conduct hostile and opposite to That we have experienced from OMNIPOTENCE, or that we might hope to meet with from our Fellows. And it can never be sufficiently reflected on that our possessions here must cease with our existence here, that such existence may, possibly, the next day or hour or even moment terminate, and that then we shall be Called to our account for our Stewardship, and for all that we have done in the flesh; when our everlasting Destiny will be Fixed by the Sentence of our ALMIGHTY JUDGE; when we shall, indeed, even the Best amongst us, stand in need, not only of Mercy, but of the Infinite Merits of CHRIST to Intercede for every One of us; and when, if we have not, in our generation, shewn mercy to Others, where by Christian Principle and Example we were called upon to do so, we must expect, for The GOD of Truth hath so Declared, that we shall receive Judgment without Mercy.

The forgiveness thus powerfully Recommended to be exercised by Man towards his Fellow, extending not only to all kinds of debts and obligations, but also to injuries both of commission and omission, is not an indiscriminate and universal act or principle of forbearance and liberality, but is to be regulated by discretion and prudence and a just insight into relative circumstances and character, all proceeding from an adoption in spirit of Gospel Principles; for otherwise encouragement would be given to a spirit of oppression, of fraud, craftiness, imposition, and injustice; and the Perpetrators thereof would be confirmed in their career of evil: a real incapacity to pay a just debt; a sincere sorrow for any prejudice occasioned to another; and a willingness to the utmost to remedy the ill or redress the grievance, should manifest themselves in the heart and conduct of the Debtor: and the Creditor should not have reason to think that more progress will be made by his Debtor in a course of injustice and imposition if he forgive him all or part of the debt, than if he do not. But ere exacting payment by the utmost rigour of the Law, a Creditor should keep in mind the character and office of Christian Charity; and looking first to the inestimable value of his own Soul, and to the course that may commend it to Treasure in Heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where Thieves break not through nor steal, he should remember by Whom it was Admonishingly and Graciously Said, "*Whatsoever ye would that Men should do unto you, do ye also unto them! That Blessed are the Merciful; for they shall obtain Mercy! That by what measure ye mete withal, it shall be Measured to you again!*" and thence learn to bear and forbear in the Christian Spirit of Benevolence and Brotherly Love and Compassion; considering that we are All Debtors unto CHRIST beyond, infinitely beyond, our utmost ability to pay; and that it is through Him, and His Merits and Mediation Alone, that GOD Freely Giveth us All Things, even the Life that is, and the Promise of That Which is to Come.

The same indulgence, in its degree, was only sought by the one Servant

from the Other, which the latter had entreated from his Master, namely, time for payment; and in the Under Servant's case both the promise and probability of repayment were more to be depended on: but cruel and unnatural almost as may seem, to a superficial Observer, the conduct of the unforgiving Servant, how Many, with no less experience of DIVINE Mercy, as glaringly transgress The DIVINE Commandments, by hard-heartedness and uncharitable dispositions; seeking with greediness their own at whatever sacrifice in suffering to the feelings and the peace of Others! This is one engine of mischief used by Satan against us for the accomplishment of his purpose to draw the mind from looking inward on itself, and viewing the depth of obligation we owe to GOD, and the consequent duty we are under to shew kindness and mercy to our Fellow-Creatures; who, equally with ourselves, are Objects of The DIVINE Regard and Compassion.

Injustice and oppression and cruelty are thus generally overtaken in their career and often disappointed in their purpose: even in a worldly point of view it is unwise to cherish such dispositions, for the scorn and contempt of our Neighbours will follow close thereupon, and when the hour of sickness or adversity or the fear of death comes upon us, no hand of relief nor voice of commiseration is extended to soothe our sorrow, but the universal outcry of satisfaction at the just recompense of evil for evil.

How irresistibly forcible are the truth and propriety of the concluding Remonstrance in the Text; and how more than equally just and proper will be the Expostulation of The ALMIGHTY, in the Day of general Retribution, against all Such as, notwithstanding the Depth of the Riches of His Love and Mercy and Forbearance Vouchsafed to them from the first hour of their birth to their latest breath upon Earth, yet rejected the supplications for clemency, however righteous the occasion for exercising it. Despicable and degrading as is that covetousness, which has this World's wealth for its object, yet is it even in a less degree hostile to The DIVINE Mind, than a heart callous to every call for mercy and Brotherly love.


The Anger of The LORD (to use a Human phrase, for GOD is A SPIRIT of Peace, and over Whom no Human Passions have controul,) is sufficiently Indicated by His Withdrawing His Favour from so poor and wretched and miserable and destitute a Creature as Man, who, if left to his own devices and confined to his own resources, cannot fail to sink deeper and deeper in helplessness, wretchedness, and despair. And how can He, Whose Judgments are necessarily Those of Righteousness and Perfect Holiness, do otherwise than Take from a Soul, so charged with bitterness and vindictiveness, the Protection and Blessing of His Grace, Which Holds not Communion with a Spirit so discordant. How salutary it would be, if All would accustom themselves to think that, amidst the obvious uncertainty of the continuance of the present Life, Each may, even ere the morrow, have the day of Probation closed upon him, and thence be called to the great Account for all, that has been done in the Body, before A JUDGE, to Whom that Life has, throughout all its course of thought and of action, been fully laid open; and Who, were He to Require the Title even of what was justly due to Him as tribute, would Find the Best of Human Race as Debtors with nothing to pay. But unending thanks to GOD, Who hath Found and Accepted in JESUS CHRIST a Recompense, Full, Perfect, and Sure, for the debts and obligations of every Soul that has truly and faithfully trusted in Him.

The Souls, that are once Delivered to the Executioners of DIVINE Justice, will be, according to Scriptural Warrant, Delivered for ever! Since the season for repentance will have passed, and the Offer of Atonement for sin been

irrevocably rejected; and thus all Means of Redemption and all hope of DIVINE Mercy will cease, and Justice, inexorable Justice, though in perfect Righteousness, must take its course. Then will confusion and Self-crimination, in all the agony of fruitless and endless remorse, be the Tormentors to which the offending Soul will be consigned. And for how small a sacrifice might such a state of inconceivable anguish and despair have been avoided! How gladly then would that Soul, could it live over its Life here again, forgive All, who had in any degree offended or injured it, and how cheerfully release every suppliant Debtor to the utmost of his due! And why will Man not consider this, and be wise in Time, that he may be Blessed in Eternity?

The Doctrine of forgiving Others, and of not judging, but with mercy, was the Favourite Doctrine of our SAVIOUR when on Earth: "*A New Commandment Give I unto you, Said He, that ye love your Enemies; that ye do good to them, that hate and despitefully use you!*" And in His Form for our prayer, the forgiveness of Others is, in spirit, made a precondition of our Obtaining Forgiveness, Where we All so greatly need It. [See the observations on this part of The LORD'S Prayer at Chapter vi, 12.]

The Wisest of Mankind, under DIVINE Inspiration, thus taught us: *Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the Poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be Heard.*—Prov. xxi, 13. And One of the Disciples of Him, Who is Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption, hath left us this Record from That ORACLE of Truth: "*He shall have Judgment without Mercy, that hath shewed no mercy! And Mercy rejoiceth against Judgment.*"—James ii, 13. And every One of us shall give account of himself to GOD.—Rom. xiv, 12.

CHAP. xix.—And it came to pass, that when JESUS had Finished These Sayings, He Departed from Galilee, and Came into the Coasts of Judea beyond Jordan: and great Multitudes followed Him; and He Healed them there.—1, 2. 

This Continual Working of Miracles by our Blessed SAVIOUR in the Healing of bodily sicknesses was not only Beneficial to the Individuals, who were so suddenly and effectually Cured of their infirmities, but was Calculated, with the Wisdom That Came from His Tongue, (Who Spake as never Man spake,) to Awaken a right view of His DIVINE Character, and a firm faith in His Precious Promises amongst those, who were Witnesses of His Wondrous Power. And though Miracles have ceased, the Tongues of Precept and of Prophetic Promise still Mercifully Remain to this our day, to justify and ratify our faith in His DIVINITY. This Manifested the Active Spirit of His Benevolence towards Mankind in That, the Day of His Sojourn upon Earth. Unto us, however, who view only historically the Occurrences of that Day, and partake not of Those Visitations of Temporal Blessings, at least in so manifest a way, even more Abundant Consolation is Held out in the Saving Health Offered to our Immortal Souls through the Mediation of CHRIST, by the Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT, Who is both Willing and Able to Heal our Spiritual infirmities, and to Strengthen and Fit us for every labour of love, to which we are Called by the Voice of GOD in our progress to Eternity.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And JESUS Arose and Cometh into the Coasts of Judea, by the farther side of Jordan: and the People resort unto Him again: and, as He was Wont, He Taught them again.*—Chap. x, 1. No reference is here made to the Works of bodily Healing; but to the Soothings of the Soul's disorders, and its fearful forebodings, by DIVINE Counsel.

St. John thus records It: *And JESUS Went away beyond Jordan into the*



*Place, where John at first baptized, and there He Abode: and Many resorted unto Him, and said, "John did no miracle: but All Things, that John spake of This Man, were true!" And Many believed on Him there.—Chap. x, 40 to 42.*

See the observations on Chapter xii, 15.

△ The Pharisees also came unto Him, tempting Him, and Saying unto Him, "Is it lawful for a Man to put away his Wife for every cause?" And He Answered, and Said unto them, "Have ye not read, that He, Which Made them at the Beginning, Made them Male and Female, and Said, 'For this cause shall a Man leave Father and Mother, and shall cleave to his Wife: and they Twain shall be one Flesh.' Wherefore they are no more Twain, but one Flesh. What, therefore, GOD hath Joined together, let not Man put asunder!" They say unto Him, "Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?" He Saith unto them, "Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, suffered you to put away your Wives: but from the Beginning it was not so. And I Say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his Wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry Another, committeth adultery: and Whoso marrieth her, which is put away, doth commit adultery."—3 to 9.

Unable to resist the force of The SAVIOUR'S Miracles, still less to deny Them, and fearful of attributing Them, in the hearing of the People, to any but A DIVINE Source, and yet unwilling to acknowledge themselves in error, and too proud to confess their own inferiority in every respect, the Pharisees attempted to confound Him by Doctrinal disputations, and by difficult and abstruse questions drawn from the letter of their Law, or their traditional interpretations of it. Their question here is a very general one, and, in the first view, rather an arduous one to answer; whence, indeed, in the subtlety of their hearts, it was chosen: for it required the strict letter of the Law to be canvassed, and yet the line to be correctly drawn, where divorce was justifiable, and where not.

The Answer of our SAVIOUR is Replete with Wisdom, Beauty, and Force. It Opens with a Consideration of GOD'S Ordinance in the original Formation of Man and Woman in sacred alliance, Enjoining wedlock to be, of all Human Ties, the strongest, and that all other Kindred affections should yield to it. *GOD Created Man in His Own Image; in the Image of GOD Created He him; Male and Female Created He them.*—Gen. 1, 27, v. 2. The Prophet Malachi, in adverting to the infringement of the Marital Law, then but too prevalent amongst his countrymen, thus remonstrated with them upon it: *The LORD hath been Witness between thee and the Wife of thy youth; against whom thou hast dealt treacherously; yet is she thy Companion and the Wife of thy covenant? And did not He Make One? For The LORD, The GOD of Israel, Saith, "that He Hateth putting away!"*—Mal. ii, 14, 15, 16.

The speech from the mouth of Adam [Gen. ii, 24.] was a Prophecy, rather than an experience, and must have been Communicated to him by The CREATOR of All, through the Inspiration of The HOLY SPIRIT; for Adam, at that time, did not know, experimentally, what the relationships of Father or Mother meant, as there were then no fruits of the union, so recently formed between him and Eve, immediately consequent on her Creation. Marriage is not only declared by the Text to be a DIVINE Ordinance, and the duties of it required by GOD, Who Appointed it, to be faithfully performed, and its union to be mutually cemented; but This Positive Obligation of DIVINE Origin and peculiar Countenance is strengthened and enforced by the solemn, though voluntary, pledge of the Parties before That GOD, to observe good faith towards Each Other in all tenderness and reciprocal affection. On Parties so religiously contracting, as they ought and profess to do, with Each Other, it is incumbent to avoid, by enduring and forbearing, not only the weightier matter of personal

separation, but any alienation of the affections; and the most zealous vigilance should be kept by them Both over their respective conduct and temper towards Each Other, to prevent any lengthened interruption to mutual esteem and conjugal felicity; and an earnest desire should be cherished and exerted to restore family harmony and peace, if, unhappily, any such occasional check should be given them.

The Law of Moses was this: *When a Man hath taken a Wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her, then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house.*—Deut. xxiv, 1. But in this case uncleanness in the Wife, which she had concealed, perhaps, before marriage, was the justifying cause of separation on the part of the Husband.

As Life is given us here to prepare us for a Spiritual Existence in an endless State hereafter; so ought our affections here to be Spiritually regulated and directed, so as to render them subservient to the advancement of the Soul in purity and holiness. For this paramount object and in a firm purpose mutually to aim at it, should marriage be contemplated and contracted. And had this been the spirit, with which that most intimate of all Human Connections had been formed, whether amongst Jews or Christians, then casual circumstances, not affecting that highest consideration, would not have been allowed to justify the bursting through a tie, which is not the less calculated to unite pious Souls, by any unlooked-for infirmity of body. But, though the Jews, in their hard-heartedness, sought to sanction their conduct under a strained construction of a Law of Moses, the Christian Dispensation wisely got rid of a seeming discretionary rule, that from the latitude with which it was tyrannically interpreted, must have given rise to much family uneasiness and distress; and by its liability to abuse was so calculated to spread through a Community the seeds of profligacy, sensuality, and insubordination. A defilement of the marriage bed shews such an utter corruption of the heart of the Man or the Woman, as necessarily to unfit the One for the Bosom Friend and Comforter of the Other, and to justify, by every feeling of morality, a lasting separation; which is thus Sanctioned by the Authority of CHRIST Himself. For any other cause or offence divorce is not only Discountenanced but Expressly Disallowed, and the Party, occasioning it, is declared guilty of a deep offence against the Law of GOD; and may add to that criminality, perhaps, the influence by example towards the commission of the same sin by Others.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And He (JESUS) Arose from thence, and Cometh into the Coasts of Judea, by the farther side of Jordan; and the People resort unto Him again, and, as He was Wont, He Taught them again. And the Pharisees came to Him, and asked Him, "Is it lawful for a Man to put away his Wife?" tempting Him. And He Answered, and Said unto them, "What did Moses command you?" And they said, "Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away." And JESUS Answered, and Said unto them, "For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept. But from the Beginning of the Creation GOD Made them Male and Female. For this cause shall a Man leave his Father and Mother; and cleave to his Wife: and they Twain shall be one Flesh: so then they are no more Twain, but one Flesh. What, therefore, GOD hath Joined together, let not Man put asunder!" And in the House His Disciples asked Him again of the same matter. And He Saith unto them, "Whosoever shall put away his Wife, and marry Another, committeth adultery against her: and if a Woman shall put away her Husband, and be married to Another, she committeth adultery."*—Chap. x, 1 to 12.

St. Paul takes occasion to enforce the duty of Chastity as a Christian duty

of high and essential bearing; and illustrates it by a reference to This Conversation of our SAVIOUR: *Know ye not* (says the Apostle) *that your Bodies are the Members of CHRIST: for the Body is not for fornication, but for The LORD: shall I then take the Members of CHRIST; and make them the members of an Harlot? GOD Forbid! What? know ye not that he, which is joined to an Harlot, is one Body? "For Two, Saith He, shall be one Flesh!" But he, that is joined unto The LORD, is One Spirit. Flee fornication; for they, who commit fornication, sin against their own bodies. What! know ye not that your Bodies are the Temple of The HOLY GHOST, Which is in you, Which ye have of GOD; and ye are not your own? For ye are Bought with a Price! Therefore glorify GOD in your Bodies, and in your Spirit, which are GOD'S!—1 Cor. vi, 15. 13. 16 to 20. To avoid fornication, the Apostle then advises every Man to have his own Wife, and every Woman to have her own Husband; and he enjoins the Husbands to render unto their Wives due benevolence; and likewise also the Wives unto their Husbands.—vii, 2, 3.*

St. Luke's narrative is thus: *And JESUS Said unto the Pharisees, "The Law and the Prophets were until John: since that time The KINGDOM of GOD is Preached, and every Man presseth into It: and it is easier for Heaven and Earth to pass, than one tittle of the Law to fail. Whosoever putteth away his Wife, and marieth Another, committeth adultery: and Whosoever marieth her, that is put away from her Husband, committeth adultery."—Chap. xvi, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18.*

On another occasion St. Paul, writing to the Ephesian Converts, *admonishes Wives to submit themselves unto their Husbands, as unto The LORD; (adding,) for the Husband is the Head of the Wife, even as CHRIST is The HEAD of the Church: and He is The SAVIOUR of the Body: therefore, as the Church is subject unto CHRIST, so let the Wives be to their own Husbands in every thing! But the Apostle goes on to say, Husbands, love your Wives! even as CHRIST also Loved the Church, and Gave Himself for It, that He might Sanctify and Cleanse It with the washing of water by the Word; that He might Present It to Himself a Glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that It should be holy and without blemish! So ought Men to love their Wives, as their own Bodies: he, that loveth his Wife, loveth himself: for no Man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it; even as The LORD the Church: for we are Members of His Body, of His Flesh, and of His Bones. For this cause shall a Man leave his Father and Mother, and shall be joined unto his Wife; and they Two shall be one Flesh: This is a Great Mystery: but I speak concerning CHRIST and the Church: nevertheless, let every One of you in particular so love his Wife even as himself: and the Wife see that she reverence her Husband.—Chap. v, 22 to 33.*

△ His Disciples say unto Him, "If the case of the Man be so with his Wife, it is not good to marry!" But He Said unto them, "All Men cannot receive This Saying, save they to whom it is Given: for there are some Eunuchs, which were so born from their Mother's womb; and there are some Eunuchs, which were made Eunuchs of Men; and there be Eunuchs, which have made themselves Eunuchs for The KINGDOM of HEAVEN'S Sake. He, that is able to receive it, let him receive it!"—10 to 12.

It was one of the sayings of the Inspired Proverbialist, that *it is better to dwell in the Wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry Woman.*—Prov. xxi, 19. And, therefore, great caution should be used in the investigation of principles and character, before such a sacred union as marriage is contracted.

St. Paul writes, *Every Man hath his proper Gift of GOD; One after this manner, and Another after that. I say, therefore, to the Unmarried and Widows,*

good for them, if they abide; but, if they cannot, let them marry; for it is to marry, than to burn. And unto the married I command, yet not I, but THE LORD, "Let not the Wife depart from the Husband; but, and if she depart, remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her Husband; and let not the man put away his Wife?" But to the Rest speak I, not THE LORD; If Brother hath a Wife, that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, do not put her away! And the Woman, which hath an Husband that believeth not, if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him! for the unbelieving Husband is sanctified by the Wife; and the unbelieving Wife is sanctified by the Husband. But if the Unbelieving depart, let him depart! A Brother or a Sister is not under bondage in such cases. But GOD hath Called us to peace. What knowest thou, O Wife, whether thou shalt save thy Husband? Or how canst thou, O Man, whether thou shalt save thy Wife?—1 Cor. vii, 7 to 16. The apostle then goes on to say, Concerning Virgins I have no Commandment from the LORD; yet I give my judgment, as One that hath obtained Mercy of The LORD, to be faithful; I suppose, therefore, that this is good for the present distress, that it is good for a Man so to be. Art thou bound unto a Wife? seek not to be loosed! Art thou loosed from a Wife? seek not a Wife!—v, 25 to 27. Thus I say, Brethren, the time is short; it remaineth that they, that have wives, be as though they had none. But I would have you without carefulness.—

. 32.

It should not seem either from the Text, or the virtual comment upon it by the Apostle, that, under strong circumstances of disagreement in principles of faith, habits and disposition, without the crime of adultery, a separation between Husband and Wife is altogether inadmissible; though such separation would not amount to any after-marriage of Either, during the lives of Both; and, on the contrary, such an after-marriage would be adultery, and punishable as such. But by every possible effort, on Each side, such a separation should be avoided; for notwithstanding occasional differences and bickerings, by an interchange of kind and accommodating checks upon temper, without compromising principle, after a time, and under the Influence of DIVINE Grace, the links of conjugal affection may be again joined; and the hearts of Both yield to the Guidance and Governance of The SPIRIT of Peace. It is This SPIRIT of Peace, Producing Meekness and Kindred affection, by Operating on Regenerated Souls, That exhibits so delightfully the Christian Character in the marriage union, and in all the enlarged duties and relationships, to which it gives rise. We are Strangers to the truest bliss on this side Heaven, who do not super-add to conjugal union Christian faith: the natural tie of nuptial attachment, so directed and governed by religious obligation, acting on the understanding, through the heart, by faith, concurs in the rightly dividing the times, discriminating between the seasons, for a due exercise of authority, concession, and gentleness. Conciliation and the restraint of the temper are eminently fruits of the Gospel of CHRIST, and thus may Conjugal happiness be often most effectually secured and restored. By aiming at Spiritualizing the affections, and directing the character of wedded Life with the garments of Purity and Piety, in the Charities of Christian Life and conversation, the best influence of Social course is obtained, acting not only upon the immediate Members of the family, whether of Children or Servants or Both, but powerfully also on a neighbourhood. Unto Such it is, who in meekness and lowliness of heart adore The GOD and FATHER of All, and in earnest desire to be Endowed with Spiritual Wisdom, and to be Guided and Assisted by DIVINE Grace, moved by a firm and lively faith in GOD'S Mercies through CHRIST, that are Given to receive These Sayings; which Others, from arrogance and pride

and Self-sufficiency and contempt of all Superiority over them, cannot receive, because they will not adopt the course, nor pursue the means which are essential to a right understanding of Them.

The situation of Self-constituted Eunuchs, <sup>alluded to,</sup> ~~and which~~ may be understood in a Spiritual, as well as bodily sense, by having the desires even restrained during the season of this probationary Life, that they may the more uninterruptedly and exclusively be devoted to the service of GOD: and if this be entered upon with soberness and in truth from such motives, one of very considerable advance towards Christian perfection is attained, it being a sacrifice of the most endearing pleasures of this Life, the more effectually to labour for and secure the Pleasures which are not for a season, but for the everlastingness of the Life to Come; a sacrifice which, though not of imperative obligation, may yet be found at that moment, when the merit or demerit of Human actions is most influential, namely, at the point of death, to bring with it, on reflection, a joy which no language can paint, nor thought conceive. St. Paul, Gifted as he was, with the Spirit of Adoption and Grace, with a Soul dwelling on the Prospect and feasting on the assured hope of Heaven, and waiting anxiously the Coming of The LORD JESUS to Lead him through the passage of the grave to the Gates of Everlasting Life, was a living Example of the advantages in a prominently Spiritual Ministry, such as he was pre-eminently Called to, of foregoing the innocent pleasures and gratifications of this Life for the Sake and in the Cause of GOD; and is an Instance of the possibility of Man's so purifying and sanctifying his affections and desires, through the supplicated Guidance of The HOLY SPIRIT, and faith in The REDEEMER, and by continually meditating on the Holy Scriptures, as to regard Worldly objects, generally, whether of pleasure or of pain, with almost equal indifference, except so far as they might be rendered subservient to the furtherance of his own or Other's Salvation.

△ Then were there brought unto Him little Children, that He should Put His Hands on them and Pray: and the Disciples rebuked them. But JESUS Said, "Suffer little Children! and forbid them not, to come unto Me; For of Such is The KINGDOM of HEAVEN." And He Laid His Hands on them; and Departed thence.—13 to 15.

It seems extraordinary that the Parents or Friends of these Children should have had more faith in the Efficacy of CHRIST'S Blessing, and His Readiness to Impart It when faithfully supplicated so to Do, than His Own Chosen Disciples. And as the effort of the Disciples to keep back the Infants from JESUS (arising, as it might have done, from a wish to spare Him trouble amidst His Life of ceaseless Toil from His Entry on His Ministry,) was frustrated at The SAVIOUR'S Own Bidding; this serves to shew that even the Appointed Ministers of GOD cannot defeat His Gracious Purposes and Acts of Mercy towards Any, even the least and most helpless of His Creatures.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And they brought young Children to JESUS, that He should Touch them; and His Disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when JESUS Saw it, He was much Displeased, and Said unto them, "Suffer the little Children to come unto Me; and forbid them not! for of Such is The KINGDOM of GOD. Verily I Say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive The KINGDOM of GOD as a little Child, he shall not enter Therein."* And He Took them up in His Arms, Put His Hands upon them, and Blessed them.—Chap. x, 13 to 16.

St. Luke's account is thus: *And they brought unto JESUS also Infants, that He would Touch them: but when His Disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But JESUS Called them unto Him, and Said, "Suffer little Children to Come unto Me; and forbid them not! for of Such is The KINGDOM of GOD. Verily I*

*Say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive The KINGDOM of GOD as a little Child, shall in no wise enter Therein.*"—xviii, 15 to 17.

These two latter named Apostles confine the object for which the Children were brought to JESUS, that He might Touch them, without adding, with St. Matthew, that He should Pray for them. But the Laying on of the Hand of The SAVIOUR of the World would have necessarily been Attended with every Spiritual Blessing to those, on whom That Hand so Rested, that could have been wished by the fondest Relatives or Friends of the Children if duly estimated.

The state of infantine innocence, probably, presents the best image of the purity and gentleness and loveliness and submissiveness of Souls, Sanctified by The SPIRIT of Grace, in the Mansions of perfect Holiness and devotedness to the Will of GOD, where the wisdom of the Worldly-Wise is very foolishness. [See the observations on Chapter xviii, 3.] The Mildness of our SAVIOUR'S Manner towards His Disciples, in the Reproof He Gave them, Heightens the Lustre of His Condescending Love in That towards the Children themselves: and how encouraging a Prospect does It Hold out of the Character of Heaven, to the Meek and Lowly of heart! And it behoves us, at the peril of the Displeasure of The MOST HIGH, to receive little Children, amidst their generally characteristic simplicity and sincerity and harmlessness, as Images of a Heavenly temper, and to strive to bring our own to that Heavenward Standard.

And, behold, One came, and said unto Him, "Good Master! what good thing shall I do, that I may have Eternal Life?" And He Said unto him, "Why callest thou Me good? There is None Good but ONE, that is, GOD! But if thou wilt enter into Life, keep the Commandments!" He saith unto Him, "Which?" JESUS Said, "Thou shalt do no murder! Thou shalt not commit adultery! Thou shalt not steal! Thou shalt not bear false witness! Honour thy Father and thy Mother! and Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thyself!" The young Man saith unto Him, "All these Things have I kept from my youth up! what lack I yet?" JESUS Said unto him, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the Poor! and, thou shalt have Treasure in Heaven: and come and follow Me!" But when the young Man heard That Saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions. Then Said JESUS unto His Disciples, "Verily I Say unto you, That a rich Man shall hardly enter into The KINGDOM of HEAVEN! And again I Say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich Man to enter into The KINGDOM of GOD." When His Disciples heard It, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, "Who then can be Saved?" But JESUS Beheld them, and Said unto them, "With Men this is impossible: but with GOD All Things are Possible!"—16 to 26. △

This title of "Good Master," was probably a familiar phrase, and used on this occasion without due consideration or regard of The DIVINE Character of The TEACHER, to Whom it was addressed, and Whom it is obvious the Person, who used it, looked upon, not as GOD, but as a Man like unto himself, though gifted with superior wisdom. For GOD, in Whom Perfection dwelleth, and from Whom all Goodness doth Proceed, is, in strictness, Alone Entitled to the epithet "Good," Which Belonged also to CHRIST, as GOD; but Which He, in the Meekness of His Spirit, Declined Acquiescing in, as applied to Himself in His Human Character, having Taken upon Him the polluting iniquities of us All.

In the behaviour of this young Man, who thus unconsciously addressed The SON of GOD, there seem to have been exhibited, to a certain extent, a respectfulness, and a disposition to acquire information as from a Source of Authority, on the greatest Truth, that can affect the Human Soul, and involving its Eternal Interest.

St. Mark's Account is thus: *And when JESUS was Gone forth into the way, there came One running, and kneeled to Him, and asked Him, "Good Master!*

*What shall I do that I may inherit Eternal Life?" And JESUS Said unto him, "Why callest thou Me good? There is None Good but ONE, that is, GOD. Thou knowest the Commandments, Do not commit adultery! Do not kill! Do not steal! Do not bear false witness! Defraud not! Honour thy Father and Mother!" And he answered, and said unto Him, "Master! all These have I observed from my youth." Then JESUS, Beholding him, Loved him, and Said unto him, "One thing thou lackest; go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the Poor! and thou shalt have Treasure in HEAVEN: and come, take up the Cross, and follow Me!" And he was sad at That Saying; and went away grieved; for he had great possessions. And JESUS Looked round about, and Saith unto His Disciples, "How hardly shall they, that have riches, enter into The KINGDOM of GOD!" And the Disciples were astonished at His Words. But JESUS Answereth again, and Saith unto them, "Children, how hard is it for them, that trust in riches, to enter into The KINGDOM of GOD! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich Man to enter into The KINGDOM of GOD." And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, "Who then can be Saved?" And JESUS, Looking upon them, Saith, "With Men it is impossible; but not with GOD; for with GOD All Things are Possible."—Chap. x, 17 to 27.*

△ St. Luke's narrative is thus: *And a certain Ruler asked JESUS, saying, "Good Master! what shall I do to inherit Eternal Life?" And JESUS Said unto him, "Why callest thou Me good? None is Good, save ONE, that is, GOD! Thou knowest the Commandments, Do not commit adultery! Do not kill! Do not steal! Do not bear false witness! Honour thy Father and thy Mother!" And he said, "All these have I kept from my youth up." Now when JESUS Heard these things, He Saith unto him, "Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the Poor! and thou shalt have Treasure in HEAVEN; and come, follow Me!" And when he heard This, he was very sorrowful; for he was very rich. And when JESUS Saw that he was very sorrowful, He Said, "How hardly shall they, that have riches, enter into The KINGDOM of GOD! For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich Man to enter into The KINGDOM of GOD!" And they, that heard it, said, "Who then can be Saved?" And He Said, "The things, which are impossible with Men, are Possible with GOD."—Chap. xviii, 18 to 27.*

The contemplation of the character of this young Man, who, in the ingenuousness of his heart, came (according to St. Mark) running and kneeling unto JESUS, and whom The Omniscient SAVIOUR of the World is said to have Embosomed in His Love, is an interesting and instructive pursuit. According to the Pharisaical spirit of proud interpretation of the Law, he had fulfilled all Righteousness: but mistrusting these blind Guides, and feeling that there was yet something needed to assure him of an Inheritance to Life and Glory Everlasting, and having heard of the consummate Wisdom of JESUS as a New Law-Giver, he sought Him out with diligence and in speed; not, certainly, expecting the Sacrifice he would be Recommended to Make, but, probably, prepared to do what the World might have thought much in concession to his new Teacher. And though That Recommendation Extended to the whole of his temporal wealth, and, being a Ruler amongst the Jews, he owed, perhaps, amidst his youth, that rank to his great riches, he did not dispute the propriety of our SAVIOUR'S Admonition, or question either its necessity or validity; but, impelled by the too general frailty and vanity of the Human heart, preferred those things, which are seen and are temporal, to Those, Which are not seen and are Eternal. He might unhesitatingly have given up half his goods to feed the Poor, had that measure only been Called for from him. Had he at once bound himself by the bands of love to His Loving SAVIOUR, what

inward peace would his heart have tasted in his remaining sojourn upon Earth ! and what full Assurance of Glory would his Soul have felt, on such a yielding to his REDEEMER'S Bidding, when, this Life ended, he should open on Eternity ! But the great debt he was unwilling at first at least to pay, his SAVIOUR, for the Love He Bore him, Willingly Paid for him : and, doubtless, he is One amongst the Remnant of the true Israelites robed in That Righteousness, Which the Love of CHRIST Casts around him. How hard, indeed, is it for any Human Soul to enter, amidst Its Holiness, The KINGDOM of HEAVEN, and not be confounded ! Indeed, but for That Full, Perfect, and Sufficient Sacrifice, Oblation, and Satisfaction Made Freely for every One by The SON of GOD Himself, how could the Brightness of That Glory, Which is HEAVEN'S Experience, be endured by Man ? The young Man, to the best of his imagined ability had kept the whole Law, and had desired to do so blamelessly : yet, in the modesty of his heart, he sought further Guidance, saying, "*What lack I yet ?*" How Few are there in the World who could say conscientiously, as this young Man did, that they had so kept so many of the Commandments, and yet think themselves not sufficiently righteous to encounter the Judgment of An Almighty GOD, in Whose Sight the Heavens themselves even are Pronounced not Pure ! Others there are, who, in the other extreme of Human folly, oppose the express Word of GOD, insisting that obedience is not essential, but that faith alone, and that merely a dry, barren, outwardly professed faith, justifies the claim to Salvation through CHRIST, and that that alone is sufficient to obtain It ; notwithstanding GOD Himself hath thus, in The PERSON of JESUS CHRIST, Said, "*If thou wilt enter into Life, keep the Commandments !*" which Enjoin the performance of duties primarily to our CREATOR, and secondarily to our Fellow-Creatures. And again, "*If you love Me, keep My Commandments !*" Piety to GOD cannot exist where there is not an earnest disposition to imitate His Perfection in Purity and Uprightness : and to follow His Precepts of Self-government and Brotherly love and general charity. The uniform Demeanour of CHRIST Tended to Manifest the propriety of a regard to moral duties and obligations, as well as to a deep and operating piety towards GOD. It is observable that in this instance our SAVIOUR only Particularized those duties, which attach between Man and Man ; but, as we shall see on an after occasion, when Answering an inquiry of similar tendency by a Lawyer, He prominently Urged the fulfilment of our duty towards GOD [see Matthew xxii, 35 to 40]. This difference is, perhaps, attributable to the difference of character in the Persons making the application, which CHRIST, as Knowing what was in Man, was fully Acquainted with ; and Who Saw the failing of the young Man was not in religious duties, but in that charity, which is the essential of a right faith in CHRIST JESUS : and, on the other hand, that it was Spiritual pride that clouded the vision of the Lawyer. Our SAVIOUR, Who had Taught His Disciples to pray to GOD, as The FATHER of the Universe, to hallow His Name, to supplicate the Coming of His Spiritual KINGDOM in the hearts of Mankind, and that His Will might be done on Earth, as faithfully and affectionately as It is done in Heaven, to look to Him for daily sustenance, to implore the Outstretch of His Mercy in the Pardon of sin, and the Power of His SPIRIT to Guard the Soul from evil, could not have Omitted the whole of the first Table of Commandments, as Deeming the observance of them unnecessary to Salvation. We must not, therefore, consider the Answer Given to this young Man, to be Such an One, as would be Given to All, asking the same question, though not in the same spirit.

The last Injunction of our SAVIOUR to the Lawyer, "*Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thyself,*" was in terms at least new : and in like manner St. Paul, 




after enumerating the moral Precepts in the Mosaic Tables, says, *If there be any Other Commandment, it is briefly comprehended in This Saying, namely, "Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thyself!"*—Rom. xiii, 9. And the Apostle goes on to comment upon it concisely, but forcibly, thus: *Love worketh no ill to his Neighbour; therefore love is the fulfilling of the Law.*—10. So on another occasion the same Apostle, writing to the Galatian Converts, thus admonished them, and, through them, has extended to us the same counsel: *Stand fast, therefore, in the Liberty, Wherewith CHRIST hath Made us Free; and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage! Only use not Liberty for an occasion to the flesh; but, by love, serve One Another! for all the Law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, "Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thyself."*—Chap. v, 1. 13, 14. St. James also speaks of this Commandment: *If ye fulfil the Royal Law* (thus pre-eminently distinguishing it,) *according to the Scripture, [Lev. xix, 18.] "Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thyself," ye do well.*—Jas. ii, 8.

All the three Evangelists agree in the main point, that of shewing how the faith of a righteous Man was put to the test, and found wanting; and though shades of difference occur in arriving at that point, they are only such as naturally arise from the different impressions made on different minds, and the varying strength of memory and more minuteness of description in Some, than in Others. Our SAVIOUR could not Mean that riches were universally to be discarded, but to Intimate that the best employment of them is in works of real and judicious charity; and that, if riches increase, the heart should not be set on them for any other object, but be made subservient to the attainment of Treasure in HEAVEN, Where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt them, and Where Thieves break not through nor steal.

The Person to whom JESUS Addressed Himself, though young in years, and more, perhaps, than comparatively advanced in propriety of conduct, had yet to divest himself of Pharisaic prejudices, and to learn that the truest and most commendable spirit of religion, is to take up the Cross of CHRIST, and, in all His Humility and Devotedness and Love, as near as may be, to follow Him. The young Man had been nursed in the lap of Affluence, the Object, perhaps, of adulation, if not of envy, and led, therefore, to consider worldly wealth, when not unrighteously obtained or applied, as not only lawful in the possession, but as almost, if not altogether, indispensably requisite to happiness. To forego, therefore, at once and in an instant all the comforts and the influence which the possession of riches had, in his uniform experience, imparted to him, was indeed a severe trial to the heart of the natural Man; and it is only where the Soul hath been disciplined in the School of Heavenly Wisdom, and strengthened by continual prayer for sustaining and abiding Grace, and fostered by meditation on the Love of CHRIST, and on the Holiness and Happiness which His devoted Followers manifest even here, and that will assuredly be theirs in the endless Life awaiting them, that it yields to the Guidance of The HOLY SPIRIT, and views the things of this World as altogether vanity and nothing worth, in the comparison with the Things, which, though not seen, are Eternal. How Many, like this young Man, amidst much of correctness and even excellence of conduct, have one dangerous failing and propensity to which they yield, though occasionally awakened by conscience to an apprehension that a continuance therein may endanger their Everlasting welfare! How Many too, for want of a sufficient knowledge of themselves, through indolence and indifference in seeking to acquire it, (though not without the most indefatigable spirit in the pursuit of the transitory things of this Life,) are but too often perseveringly trying to find out and expose the failings of Others; and from the want of a true test of the weakness of the Human heart under trial and temptation, from which they may

have been spared, judge of those, that fall within their criticism, with unsparing severity; and arrogate to themselves the perfection of righteousness and assure themselves of Salvation; resting on the misconceived Mercy of GOD, without seeking It in Self-abasement through That Mediation of CHRIST, by Whose Righteousness alone the true Christian hopes to be Sanctified. To Such, the interesting narrative in the Text, as indeed is the whole Tenor of the Gospel, if gravely read and seriously applied, is calculated to afford a very instructive and salutary Lesson. The propriety of the Injunction imposed on the young and wealthy Ruler, was, in effect, allowed by himself; for he did not deny its necessity, or attempt to argue against its reasonableness, but by his countenance of sadness admitted that it had touched powerfully his conscience, though it had not won upon his heart. The general Precept to be gathered from it by ourselves is, that universal obedience to The DIVINE Ordinances, and a true and hearty sorrow and repentance whenever we fail in it, are essential to manifest the sincerity of our faith, since, from this united operation, efficacy is given to the Mediation of CHRIST and to the Sanctifying Power of The HOLY SPIRIT in reconciling our Souls to GOD. For nothing of worldly interest or concern should be suffered to stand in the way of our devotedness to The DIVINE Will, and of the advancement of our Souls towards The KINGDOM of HEAVEN. We should piously consult the Word of GOD to know thoroughly That HOLY Will; and seeking, by prayer, the Light and Guidance of His HOLY SPIRIT, should follow faithfully and fervently where so Directed or Prompted to go, and whatsoever our hand findeth to do under Such Dictation, should do with our might; knowing, that in the grave, whither we are hastening, the riches of this World cannot follow us; and that if we have not, previously to our departure hence, laid up for ourselves Treasure in HEAVEN, and become rich in faith through CHRIST, we shall be poor and miserable and destitute and naked, without peace and without hope in the general Resurrection. [See observations on Chapter vi, 20.]

What the young Man's final determination was is left to conjecture; but enough of the story is disclosed to shew us that, amidst much of apparent and imagined righteousness, there may be the absence of an entire devotedness to GOD, and that the whole heart may not be right with Him, when tried by a test, to which it had not been previously subjected. Let us, therefore, take heed, when we most confidentially think we stand most assured of DIVINE Favour, lest peradventure we fall from Grace! neither let us suppose that, whatever we may have done for the Honour of GOD, and for the Cause of CHRIST, we have done enough, whilst we have the power of doing more; but go on even unto the end of our days, to prove our love and gratitude to our REDEEMER, and to manifest a disposition to follow whithersoever He Invites us; considering that His Word is Open to us; and diligently searching the Scriptures and trying and examining our own hearts, we shall find out the Way that leadeth unto Life, and that, to Help us to walk therein, He will be a Lamp to our feet and a Light to our paths.

The Omnipotence of JEHOVAH can have no limit but His Own Will.  Even the turning the hearts of the Disobedient to the Wisdom of the Just, is His Gracious Work. "*I know that Thou, LORD, canst Do every Thing,*" was the pious exclamation of Job, after the fullest experience of a seeming Abandonment of him by GOD. [Chap. xlii, 2.]

In the prayer of the Prophet Jeremiah, that Attribute of Power is thus illustrated: *Behold, Thou, LORD GOD, hast Made the Heaven and the Earth by Thy Great Power and Stretched-out Arm; and there is nothing too hard for Thee! Great in Counsel and Mighty in Work! for Thine Eyes are Open upon all the ways of the Sons of Men.*—Chap. xxxii, 17. 19.

It is the setting the heart and its affections on the acquiring riches, or on the sensual fruits of them, when gained, that constitutes the rich Man's offence to GOD, Who thus has opposed to Him, though CREATOR and PRESERVER of All Things in Heaven and Earth, an object of His own Creatures in superior attention and regard to Himself. The danger of riches consists in the ready access they give to the gratification and fulfilment of every desire of the heart; thus creating artificial wants, which, to say the least objectionably of them, pervert the means we have of doing good, to unprofitable purposes, draw off the mind from the true and only worthy Object of existence here, and waste the little of time that is allowed to prepare for a State of infinite duration and of perfect Holiness and Purity. If riches be the consequence of descent, it should be considered that they are the Gift of The Common FATHER of the Universe; and that, if applied according to His Commandments in Christian beneficence and hospitality, they will prove a blessing instead of a curse, and the outlay thereof will be repaid by the enduring joy of an approving conscience here, and with the hope of the Riches of DIVINE Favour hereafter. If wealth accumulate under our industry, as the fruit of a legitimate pursuit in the Life that is, let us take care that our gains be just, and our appropriation thereof consistent with our Christian profession.

The astonishment expressed by the Disciples was perfectly natural, considering the force of Expression Used by our SAVIOUR to characterize the almost impossibility of a rich Person, who gives to riches a paramount affection, obtaining Everlasting Salvation: but the reasonableness of such a Comparison is obvious, when the Pure and Spiritual Nature of CHRIST'S KINGDOM of HEAVEN is considered, and the utter unfitness of the Soul to enter Therein, but through faith in His Mediation, and the Fruits thereof in the following His Preceptive Example.

△ Then answered Peter, and said unto Him, "Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed Thee; what shall we have therefore?" And JESUS Said unto them, "Verily I Say unto you, That ye, which have followed Me, in the Regeneration, when The SON of Man shall Sit in the Throne of His Glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve Thrones, judging the twelve Tribes of Israel. And every One, that hath forsaken houses, or Brethren, or Sisters, or Father, or Mother, or Wife, or Children, or lands, for My Name's sake, shall receive an Hundred-fold, and shall inherit Everlasting Life. But Many that are first shall be last: and the last shall be first."—27 to 30.

In the earliest age of Christianity, Brotherly love so prevailed, that *All, who believed, were together, and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all Men as every One had need: and breaking bread from house to house, they did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart.*—Acts ii, 44 to 46.

How interesting a picture of mutual good-will and benevolence is here represented! And how happy would it be were the Societies, professing Christianity, to be so Spiritualized in their principles of conduct as, in a degree at least, to revive so excellent a custom: each Parish or Community of Worshipers forming, as it were, a large Family, and each Individual contributing, according to his means, by money, labour, intellectual pursuit, or otherwise, towards the formation of a general stock; remembering from Whom it came, and to Whom the faithful account of its appropriation must be rendered; and trusting to the Assurance of That Word, Which is Truth itself, that *it is more pleasant to give, than to receive.* From the state of luxury and refinement prevailing in the present times, and which has been of such long standing, such a change and reformation in the habits and tempers and pursuits of Man cannot be speedily looked-for; but still it will eventually be established, when the Fulness

of The MESSIAH'S KINGDOM is Brought in: and some approach to it might individually be made, did each One strive to be content with a little, and, regarding himself as the Steward both of the temporal and Spiritual riches or blessings committed to him, so appropriate them to the benefit of Others, as that virtually they might be in common; and, thereby, the most warrantable object of his own Life be answered, and the Honour of his Heavenly MASTER and SAVIOUR be promoted. On a death-bed, when the mind forms the soundest judgment, how immeasurably more than unsatisfactory must be the reflection on misspent wealth, as also on misemployed time and talent, which a review of Life forces on the remembrance! how much of each has Self-gratification absorbed! how little, how very little, has been dedicated to GOD! And, on the contrary, how inestimably consoling amidst the severest pangs of sickness and the imminent apprehension of death, must be the thought that, of the Blessings, Which An All-Merciful PROVIDENCE had so Bountifully and Unmeritedly Dealt out to us, we, in imitation and admiration of His Great Goodness, have suffered Others largely and beneficially to partake; giving, at the same time, the Honour to Him, to Whom alone it was due. Unhappily the influence of present objects is so powerful over the Human mind, through the weakness and corruption of the heart, and an indisposition to use the Proffered Aid of The HOLY SPIRIT, that the Life beyond the grave is comparatively but little thought of, and less provided for. But Experience would teach the heart, that the truest bliss, even in the Life that is, will follow an entire devotedness to the Will of GOD, and that the assurance of possessing the Everlasting Treasure accompanies that experience: a state of heart and of feeling which should be sought with a toil and perseverance that no earthly object should divert.

*Charge them that are rich in this World!* saith St. Paul, in his Letter of instruction to his Disciple Timothy, *that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches; but in The Living GOD, Who Giveth us Richly all things to enjoy; that they do good; that they be rich in good works; ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on Eternal Life!*—1 Tim. vi, 17 to 19. 21.

Of property, the Apostles in general had not much to forsake; but they had what to them and to All is more valuable than property, Kindred and Connections linked to them by the ties of affection and habit; and all these, with all that they had, (which was to them riches, being equal to their wants or their wishes,) they abandoned instantaneously on the Invitation of CHRIST. [See observations on Chapter iv, 20.] The same opportunity, that presented itself to the Apostles of proving their preference for their DIVINE MASTER over all Worldly considerations and influences, presents itself, virtually, to every One of us: and if we will give up the pleasures of the World, and relinquish all temporal attachments, except so far as they can be rendered subservient to the Glory and Praise of our CREATOR and REDEEMER, like those faithful Followers of CHRIST; like them we shall find the truest riches and the most pure and exhaustless joys, when the World and all that is therein shall shrink from our grasp, and Death shall lead us from Time unto Eternity.

The word "Regeneration," as Used by our SAVIOUR here, implies a new birth of the Soul, through faith in His Restoration of our Nature to its Image of GOD; a State to which, without that Adoption and Mediation, it could never have arrived. Amidst the pre-eminency of the faithful Apostles and Prophets in their Celestial Advancement, no jealousies will arise; but, on the contrary, happy, unspeakably happy, will every inferior Minister of the Same Sublime Court be, in every wish infinitely more than gratified, and contributing, in the experience of perfect happiness, to diffuse it to All in Communion with them;

hailing the advent and accession of Others, who, when tried in the Sacred Balance, having CHRIST on their side, shall not be Found wanting in faith and repentance and the true fruits thereof. We and All, who profess the Christian religion, have professed to follow The SON of Man in the Regeneration of the Soul from the death of sin unto a life of Righteousness, and to transfer ourselves from the service of Satan unto that of The Living GOD. If, like the Apostles, we are indeed and in truth what we outwardly seem or profess to be, (and if we are not, we are Hypocrites, and the deepest Enemies to ourselves by sacrificing our Everlasting Peace to the false and fleeting pleasures and hollow gratifications of Time,) we shall, when The SON of Man shall Sit on the Throne of His Glory, universally Acknowledged by Men, Angels, and Devils as The Blessed and Only POTENTATE, The KING of Kings, and LORD of Lords, Who only Hath Immortality, be Called to the Mansions of Heavenly Rest and of Holy Joy with the Exalting Utterance from Himself, "*Come, ye Blessed of My FATHER, Enter you into your MASTER'S Joy, and inherit the Kingdom Prepared for you from the Foundation of the World!*"—Chap. xxv, 34. And this Further Address of our SAVIOUR the truly faithful Christians may encouragingly apply to themselves: "*Ye are they, which have continued with Me in My Temptations; and I Appoint unto you A Kingdom, as My FATHER hath Appointed unto Me, that ye may eat and drink at My Table in My KINGDOM.*"—Luke xxii, 28 to 30.

St. Paul, in like manner, extends the glorious Prospect to every true Believer, saying, *Do ye not know that the Saints shall judge the World?*—1 Cor. vi, 2.

This Scripture exhorts not to unnatural dealings between Kindred, as Members of the same Family; neither in spirit is it meant to be opposed to the spirit of the fifth Commandment: but where attention and devotedness to Relations, however nearly allied to us, or the continuing with them, is incompatible with a just sense of our merited love and becoming obedience to GOD, then should the tie of Earthly Connection give way to the Heavenly One, if we would hope for the fruits of Spiritual Love. And when for conscience sake and the Gospel's the endearments of Life are surrendered, in order that the good fight of faith may be fought with more zeal and earnestness in a wider and more extended field of Christian warfare against the World, the flesh, and the Devil; and that the Power of The HOLY SPIRIT may be more extensively Diffused over the Souls of Human kind, then, indeed, may the Especial Blessing of GOD be expected, as Promised on such a Sacrifice for His Honour, not only in the Life to Come, but even in this present Life; and the heart may thence experience a joy that the World can neither give nor take away; even an inward peace, the foretaste of that perfect Happiness which forms the Atmosphere of Heaven.

△ St. Mark's narrative is thus: *Then Peter began to say unto JESUS, "Lo, we have left all, and have followed Thee!" And JESUS Answered, and Said, "Verily, I Say unto you, There is no Man, that hath left house, or Brethren, or Sister, or Father, or Mother, or Wife, or Children, or lands, for My Sake and the Gospel's, but he shall receive an Hundred-fold, now in this time, houses, and Brethren, and Sisters, and Mothers, and Children, and lands, with persecutions, and in the World to Come Eternal Life. But Many that are first shall be last; and the last first."*—Chap. x, 28 to 31. Meaning, probably, that even amidst such deprivations of social enjoyments, and under the bodily sufferings to which patient and persevering Christian Spirits are exposed in this Life, the contemplation and assurance of a Future State, where CHRIST shall be All, and in All, should, in a hundred ways, communicate to the Soul a far more exquisite and permanent delight than can possibly be derived from Worldly Connections and Possessions, and such considerations, which have not GOD for their Primary

Prevailing Object. And with this account of St. Mark St. Luke agrees, whose record is thus: *Then Peter said, "Lo, we have left all and followed Thee!" And JESUS Said unto them, "Verily I Say unto you, There is no Man, that hath left house, or Parents, or Brethren, or Wife, or Children, for The KINGDOM of GOD'S Sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the World to Come Life Everlasting."*—Chap. xviii, 28 to 30.

"Many that are first shall be last," &c. By this we may understand that the proud, the haughty, the over-bearing Ones of the Earth, but more especially those who are Spiritually proud, and Such as trust in their own imagined righteousness, deeming any MEDIATOR unnecessary, or that their own merits will render them Acceptable before A Just and Holy GOD (not sufficiently considering that He is also A GOD of Truth, and hath Declared that there is no Name under Heaven whereby Mankind can be Saved, but The Name of JESUS CHRIST and Him Crucified,) will be brought low, even in their own estimation. Whilst the Meek and Lowly of heart, and they, that have put their whole trust in The LORD, and sought His Favour and the Fulfilment of His Covenant of Peace by penitence, and faith in the Necessity and Sufficiency of CHRIST'S Atoning and Propitiatory Sacrifice, observing the Will and following the Commandments of The LORD, through the supplicated and acknowledged Assistance of The HOLY SPIRIT, will be highly Exalted, being Robed in their SAVIOUR'S Righteousness, and having Crowns of Glory Placed upon their heads. At This Discriminating Season, the veil of hypocrisy will be withdrawn, and All will know the Truth, and stand fully Revealed to themselves, as well as to The All-Searching SPIRIT of GOD; and then will Many, who have lived and died in the reputation of righteousness and holiness, but who honoured The LORD only with their lips and by outward ceremonies and professions of devotion, at the same time keeping their hearts far from Him, and following, in secrecy and subtlety, the bent of their own evil and worldly and sensual passions and inclinations, forfeit for ever the pre-eminence, to which a misjudging World had raised them or their reputation, and sink into the lowest depths of DIVINE Rejection, overwhelmed even by the torment of Self-condemnation and fruitless reproach. Then also will they, who, patient under affliction, submissive under oppression, lowly in their own eyes, not seeking their own, cheerful under privations, faithful under temptations, mortifying the evil affections, and bringing both their Souls and bodies into subjection unto the law of righteousness, after the Example and from their cherished love of CHRIST, shine forth as the Light, being Called as the Adopted Children of their Heavenly FATHER, and Ranged with Saints and Angels in the Courts of The LORD of Hosts, and sharing with their Once Crucified REDEEMER the Glories of His Triumph over Sin, and Death, and Hell, eating the Bread and drinking the Waters of Life Eternal freely in the ineffably Blessed Mansions of Perfect Peace and Holy Joy. Hence let us avoid taking to ourselves the merit that Others may inconsiderately give us, because we may do the Will of GOD, and seem, in this Life, to experience His Favour; remembering that it is He, Who Enableth us both to will and to do of His Good Pleasure, and that our sufficiency is in CHRIST, through The HOLY SPIRIT! And may our reflections on any better Hope that may be in us than in Others around us, call forth only higher expressions and deeper proofs of gratitude and praise for having been Brought into Such a Sanctified State, and for having been Made, (if so it may be,) in any degree, instrumental to the furtherance of GOD'S Gracious Purposes of Extending His KINGDOM of Righteousness and Holiness upon Earth; inwardly rejoicing and outwardly exulting at so Precious a Preference having been Imparted to us; and earnestly praying and confirming our prayers by our unfeigned and unfailing endeavours to exhort Others to lay

hold of Salvation, as well as to continue in the same faith and practice unto the end, that we may thereby, as far as may be consistent with The DIVINE Will and Word, help to work out our own!

Our SAVIOUR'S Exhortation and Encouragement to His Disciples, on another Occasion, were, "*He, that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he, that is chief, as he that doth serve!*"—Luke xxii, 26.

△ CHAP. XX.—"For The KINGDOM of HEAVEN is like unto a Man, that is an Householder, which went out early in the morning to hire Labourers into his vineyard: and when he had agreed with the Labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And he went out about the third hour, and saw Others standing idle in the Market-place, and said unto them, 'Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you!' And they went their way. Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise. And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found Others standing idle, and saith unto them, 'Why stand ye here all the day idle?' They say unto him, 'Because no Man hath hired us.' He saith unto them, 'Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive.' So when even was come, the Lord of the vineyard saith unto his Steward, 'Call the Labourers, and give them their hire; beginning from the Last unto the First!' And when they came, that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every Man a penny. But when the First came, they supposed that they should have received more: and they likewise received every Man a penny. And when they had received it, they murmured against the good Man of the house, saying, 'These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day.' But he answered One of them, and said, 'Friend, I do thee no wrong; didst not thou agree with me for a penny? Take that thine is, and go thy way! I will give unto this last, even as unto thee. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good?' So the Last shall be First, and the First Last: for Many be Called; but Few Chosen."—1 to 16.

This is an exemplification of the jealousy and discontentedness of the Human heart, and of the presumption and arrogance of Self-deservings, extending even to the assumption of an exclusive right to the inestimable Prize of the Everlasting Riches and Glory of an Inheritance in The KINGDOM of HEAVEN. But Such Inheritance, being the Free-Will Offering of GOD to Man, through the Costly Purchase Thereof by His Incarnate SON, is Subject to Conditions Which That GIVER has Annexed to It. To Such as gratefully accept and faithfully fulfil Those Conditions, so pure and perfect and satisfactory will be the joy resulting from Its Possession, that, so far from envying Others a Participation in That Inheritance, their own happiness would be proportionately increased by a Community and Fellowship Therein. The Man, who is duly influenced by a Saving faith, will ever walk so humbly with GOD, as to acknowledge an utter unworthiness of The DIVINE Favour with All the Riches of DIVINE Mercy, when contemplated in Its Continuance throughout an Eternity; even had his conduct, through the longest possible duration of Life here, been studiously conformable to the Revealed Will of GOD, and the inward Suggestions of His HOLY SPIRIT. But who, amongst all the Families of all the Generations of Mankind, have so walked before GOD in all the days and hours of their pilgrimage? None! no, not One! And this the most faithful of His Servants know and feel, and under the conviction of much weakness, much wanderings, much failings, much inconsistency, and much occasional transgressions against A Heavenly FATHER, and A Gracious BENEFactor, the true Christian acknowledges that, through the Sufferings and Sacrifice and Interposed Righteousness of The SON of GOD Alone, can he hope to escape the Displeasure of An All-Pure and HOLY GOD, and to attain unto the unspeakable Blessing of Heavenly Peace and Angelic Joy in The HOLY GHOST, as the

Wages of DIVINE Adoption, when Time shall be no more, and the Reign of Eternity shall open upon the Immortal Soul. He is so far, therefore, from urging a superiority over other Servants of their Common CREATOR and REDEEMER, in his hopes of the Countenance and Favour of GOD, that he would gladly even see the most Rebellious against the Law of That GOD converted from the error of their ways, that they might be Received, with him, into the Mansions of Eternal Blessedness. It is not, therefore, the true Spiritual Labourer that is here meant, but, as before observed, the Righteous in their own esteem, who, thinking of themselves more highly than they ought to think, feel no consciousness of the unfitness of their natural dispositions for the Holiness of Heaven, and do not acknowledge JESUS, in the love of Him, though they do not outwardly deny Him, but rest upon their formal and ceremonial worship, and on the adequacy of their own works to commend them before GOD.

In the Character given of the different Labourers, those, that worked only through a part of the day, entered upon their work, as soon as they were called. The situation of the Gentiles, as contrasted with that of the Jews, was, probably, in a peculiar degree, within our SAVIOUR'S Contemplation, when Uttering This Parable: but the important Doctrine to be collected from It, for our own edification and governance, is the Goodness Manifested by The LORD of the Vineyard, The Great JEHOVAH Himself, in being so Graciously Disposed to Reward the least Labourer in His Service. It is not only Those who stand idle because they are not hired, but Those who might and ought to have worked through all the days of their Lives in His Cause, in recompense of His experienced Goodness and Mercy in every day of the Life that is, but who refused so to labour until almost the last day of their existence here; when smitten with a sense of their injustice, and finding their Heavenly MASTER Still Waiting to be Gracious, they have then begun to work out their Salvation with fear and trembling; and Such, through the Riches of DIVINE Grace in CHRIST JESUS, amidst the sincerity of repentance and the firmness of their faith in Him, shall in nowise lose their Reward. The Infant of days, and the Child cut down in its prime, though Strangers to Spiritual labour in the Life that is, will, for CHRIST'S Sake, participate in the boundless Liberality of The LORD of the Harvest, when He Divides to every One severally as He Will. If, in maturer life, the heart be but once set right with GOD, then does the Power of The SPIRIT Reign Undivided and Unopposed in it; and so Sanctifies it, as to Render it, through the Accepted Mediation of CHRIST'S Sacrifice and Merits, pure as the Spirits in Heaven are pure. Whether, therefore, the time of our sojourning here be long, or otherwise, after such conversion of our whole heart to GOD, whether our labour of love in His Service begin in the morning or evening of our days, yet being then earnest and unremitting, and rendered in sincerity and in truth as an evidence of faith in our REDEEMER'S Sacrifice, it is Accepted by our HEAVENLY FATHER, for His Beloved SON'S Sake. It is the most exalted Privilege of Man to bear a part in the Purity and Holiness of Heaven; and which is Obtained for him by DIVINE Grace, through CHRIST'S Adoption of our Nature, and by faith in His Love, working on humble and grateful hearts, and insuring, in prospect, to the believing Soul the Promised Hire from The LORD of the Spiritual Vineyard in the Heavenly Jerusalem.

Faint indeed is the image here given of The ALMIGHTY'S Goodness to Man, and of Man's captiousness at His temporal Dispensations, forgetful or unmindful of the Inestimable Good Reserved in an endless Life to Come, for every Soul of MAN, that will obey the Gracious Call to Holiness, through faith in CHRIST JESUS. GOD Appoints us to labour in the Life that is, *that* being one of the Mild Chastisements Visited upon Man for his infringement of the



Paradisaical Law; to eat our bread with the sweat of our brow, and to labour in our several vocations: but so Benevolently Constituted are These His Ordinances, that the very fulfilment of them proves a source of satisfaction and delight, promoting health of body and peace of mind. In this present Life, therefore, the judiciously Industrious receive a reward for toil and exertion equal, generally, to any deservings. But GOD does not Bound His Benefits by so narrow a limit as Human merit. What, therefore, on reflection, can justify, even to itself, the Human Mind in putting forth a direct claim on the plea of Self-deserving to the Paramount Beneficence of GOD throughout an Eternity, when sensible of experiencing here so very Much beyond its due recompense? How utterly inconsistent is it with our infinite obligations to The CREATOR and GIVER of Life and Hope and all Things, to arrogate a judgment upon His Dispensations, either to ourselves or to Others? The utmost stretch of conception that the Human mind can form, is immeasurably short of any adequate idea of the Glories of a perfectly Spiritualized State, and of the Holy Joy associated with a full knowledge and unbroken contemplation of The DIVINE Attributes in All their Influence and Perfection, embracing a visible Manifestation of GOD'S Power and Wisdom and Goodness. Equally incapable are we, in this Life, of conceiving the nature of the Eternity, in which that condition of Beatitude will exist, and that too in a continually increasing degree. How, therefore, can any One, who cherishes the hope of such a State of Salvation, be envious of Others being Called to a co-equal Participation Therein! Where such an unchristian spirit prevails, there is too much ground to fear that the heart is not right with its GOD, nor the Soul fit to meet Him in Judgment. And, alas! how widely diffused, though how little individually suspected or acknowledged, is a proneness to depreciate the qualities of Others, and, with an equal confidence, to exalt ourselves in the comparison! and what is this in effect but to interfere with the Peculiar Providence of The JUDGE of All Mankind; and to set at nought His Express Command, "*Judge not, that ye be not Judged!*" It is setting up our opinion most presumptuously and most dangerously in asserted anticipation of the Infallible Judgment of GOD; an evil which would not cleave to us, did we faithfully and earnestly examine ourselves, and justly weigh, in the balances of the Sanctuary, the good that may be in us, when contrasted with the Exhaustless and Tender Loving-Kindness of JEHOVAH towards us, in Creation, Providence, and Grace, and especially in those hopes and Promises of Glory, Pledged in the New Testament, of Pardon and Reconciliation, Written with the Blood and Sealed with the Death of CHRIST. We should then receive our hire here, not with sullenness or discontent, because Others, seemingly less actively or usefully engaged in the Vineyard of our LORD, and in doing His Work, receive equal or even greater wages, but should regard the Mercy and Bounty of PROVIDENCE, as therefore Calling on us for a more grateful acknowledgment, that amidst our own manifold and great and unmerited Blessings, so Much was Reserved for Others.

St. Paul's Remonstrance with the Murmurers of his day, but too keenly applies to this our own day: *O Man, who art thou, that repliest against GOD? Shall the thing formed, say to him that formed it, "Why hast thou made me thus?" Hath not the Potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?*—Rom. ix, 20, 21.

Amongst both Jews and Gentiles how General and how Merciful is the Call of GOD to Salvation through JESUS CHRIST! In his origin, Man was Made unto Honour, for in *The Image of GOD Made He him*; and though fallen, by his own perverseness, from such his first and high estate, and departing, by Self-will, from that great and glorious Likeness, yet through the Influence of

DIVINE Love in the Free-Will Offering and Sanctifying Mediation of The SON of GOD, by Adopting that Nature and Restoring it to its pristine purity, does The HOLY GOD, by the Gracious Revelation of His Will, and the inward Promptings of His HOLY SPIRIT, Urge on every One of us to come into His Vineyard, that we may be Filled with the Fulness of the Sufficiency That is in CHRIST. But notwithstanding Admonitions so Benevolent and Incitements so Encouraging, Man, still yielding to his carnal affections and Worldly desires, gives loose to indulgence, and regards not, or is deaf to the Benign Offers of his CREATOR; and though the Gate, that opens to the Way which leadeth unto Everlasting Life, is free to All who have faith to approach it, yet Few, alas, how Few! do strive to enter in thereat. So full of folly is the Soul of Man, so immured in darkness is his Spirit, when he wilfully shuts out The DIVINE Light, and sets at nought Its Guidance, (though It Leadeth unto all Truth and to the only Enduring Happiness,) that he loiters in the paths of imagined pleasantness, and will not work out his own Salvation, wherein alone he would find both peace and plenteousness, and his Soul's Rest in Heaven.

And JESUS, Going up to Jerusalem, Took the Twelve Disciples apart in the way, and Said unto them, "Behold, We Go up to Jerusalem; and The SON of Man shall be Betrayed unto the chief Priests and unto the Scribes; and they shall condemn Him to death; and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify Him. And the third day He shall Rise again."—17 to 19. △

This Minute Prophecy by our SAVIOUR of the accumulating Sufferings, and Torture, and Death awaiting Him, and of His Resurrection, had been before Adverted to, [Chap. xvi, 21.] and is here related, without comment, by the Evangelist. [See the observations Thereon.]

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And They were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and JESUS Went before them: and they were amazed: and, as they followed, they were afraid. And He Took again the Twelve, and Began to Tell them What Things should happen unto Him, Saying, "Behold, We Go up to Jerusalem: and The SON of Man shall be Delivered unto the chief Priest and unto the Scribes: and they shall condemn Him to death; and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles; and they shall mock Him, and shall scourge Him, and shall spit upon Him, and shall kill Him. And the third day He shall rise again."*—Chap. x, 32 to 34.

St. Luke records as follows: *Then JESUS Took unto Him the Twelve, and Said unto them, "Behold, We Go up to Jerusalem; and All Things, That are Written by the Prophets concerning The SON of Man, shall be Accomplished: for He shall be Delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on: and they shall scourge Him, and put Him to death. And the third day He shall Rise again."* And they understood none of These Things: and This Saying was hid from them; neither knew they the Things Which were Spoken.—Chap. xviii, 31 to 34.

Our Blessed LORD had not only Unparalleled Sufferings to Undergo, but He had the Entire Foreknowledge of them; thus, as it were, Enduring protracted Torture by Anticipation in Apprehension, as well as in actual Experience, and that not only in Body but in Spirit, as Enduring not only Corporeal Pain the most excruciating, but the inconceivably more Grievous Affliction to His Pure and Holy SPIRIT, the Pollutions of a guilty and ungrateful World, the iniquities of which He was thus Fore-Appointed to Expiate by His Sufferings, where there should be faith in Him, as The Atoning and Reconciling MEDIATOR between GOD and Man. The delivery of CHRIST to the Gentiles, meant to the Roman power, in subservience to which the Jews at that time were, and without whose

sanction they could not put any One, even of their own Nation, to death. But so rancorous was the malice of the Scribes and Pharisees against the Lowly and Soul-Purifying JESUS, Whose Life as well as Doctrine were offensive to them, as both Exposing and Censuring their irreligious Lives and unsound faith, that they took every occasion to influence not only the Popular feeling amongst the Jews, but to direct even the callousness and fierceness of Foreign Soldiery and arbitrary Rulers against Him; and by the contumely and accusations of such influential Personages, who had yielded to their government, the Romans were unconsciously instrumental to the darkening That Light for a season, Which Came from Heaven to Lighten the Gentiles, as well as to be The Glory of ~~the~~ People Israel.

The prepossession to which the Disciples had inveterately given their minds, that CHRIST'S KINGDOM was to be an Earthly One, Superceding all other Sovereignities, prevented their attaching a literal meaning to These Prophetic Utterances of The SAVIOUR.

△ Then came to Him the Mother of Zebedee's Children with her Sons, worshipping Him, and desiring a certain thing of Him. And He Said unto her, "What wilt thou?" She saith unto Him, "Grant that These, my two Sons, may sit, the One on Thy Right Hand, and the Other on Thy Left, in Thy KINGDOM!" But JESUS Answered, and Said, "Ye know not what ye ask! Are ye able to drink of the Cup, that I shall Drink of; and to be Baptized with the Baptism That I am Baptized with?" They say unto Him, "We are able!" And He Saith unto them, "Ye shall indeed drink of My Cup, and be Baptized with the Baptism That I am Baptized with: but to sit on My Right Hand, and on My Left, is not Mine to Give; but it shall be Given to them, for whom it is Prepared of My FATHER."—20 to 23.

Fond as are the feelings of a Mother towards her Children, yet, in the World of Spirits, even this natural affection will yield to the love of Truth and Righteousness: and, if distinctions there prevail, All will desire that the most Holy amongst the Redeemed of The LORD should, in Honour, be the most Exalted. The narrow circle of kindred attachment, even where sanctified by Gospel influence, will be enlarged into universal Fellowship and holy Love; and The DIVINE Mercies and Blessings Showered upon Each, will be regarded and hailed as Enriching the Treasures of All. It was in ignorance of the Nature of CHRIST'S KINGDOM, through the darkness of Spiritual understanding, obscured by a false pride and by the veil of the Flesh, that led the Mother of Zebedee's Children to seek for them that Pre-eminence, which a just knowledge of CHRIST, and a conviction of His Unerring Wisdom and Justice, would have assured her was not reasonably attainable by them, and should be Reserved for Such as The DIVINE Discretion might Elect to it. *Shall not The JUDGE of all the Earth Do Rightly?*

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And James and John, the Sons of Zebedee, come unto JESUS, saying, "MASTER, we would that Thou shouldest Do for us whatsoever we shall desire!" And He Said unto them, "What would ye, that I should Do for you?" They said unto Him, "Grant unto us, that we may sit, One on Thy Right Hand, and the Other on Thy Left Hand in Thy Glory!" But JESUS Said unto them, "Ye know not what ye ask! Can ye drink of the Cup, that I Drink of, and be Baptized with the Baptism, That I am Baptized with?" And they say unto Him, "We can!" And JESUS Said unto them, "Ye shall indeed drink of the Cup, that I Drink of; and with the Baptism, That I am Baptized withal, shall ye be Baptized. But to sit on My Right Hand and on My Left Hand, is not Mine to Give: but it shall be Given to them for whom it is Prepared."*—Chap. x, 35 to 40.

In this account all mention is omitted of the Mother of James and John ; nor is the act of worshipping noticed by St. Mark : these variances, however, are not material to the main object of Both the Writers, which was to shew in what Manner our SAVIOUR had Treated an appeal to Him from or on behalf of Two of the Four earliest Called Apostles, (and One of them most signally Gifted with his DIVINE MASTER'S Love,) for the most Favoured Preference when He Came unto His KINGDOM. The Question Put by our SAVIOUR, as introductory to His Answer, should seem Intended to Lead the Disciples, by the Gentlest and most Delicately Communicated Admonition, to a consideration of the Difference between JESUS, as Very GOD and KING of Heaven, and His Suppliants, the mere Creatures of His Power ; and should have checked presumption in them. The Cup, of Which our SAVIOUR Drank, was the Cup Which His Heavenly FATHER Suffered to be administered to Him, and Which He Drank to the dregs. In this sense, therefore, could it be true, that the Disciples were able to drink of the same Cup with Him ; but to such a trial only would they be subjected, as The HOLY SPIRIT would Enable them to sustain. But the Cup of Which, in the fulness of its measure, drugged as it was with the impoisoning potion of a whole World's iniquities, The REDEEMER of Mankind Drank, no mere Man could taste of : for, indeed, even The SON of GOD Himself Paused, ere He Took it, as we shall eventually see, when It was administered to Him, and this even in the presence of the same two Sons of Zebedee, when, falling on His Face and Praying, He Said, "*O My FATHER, if it be Possible, let this Cup pass from Me !*" And This was twice Repeated ; yet on each occasion concluded with the Utterance of profound Resignation to The DIVINE Appointment : "*Nevertheless, not as I Will : but as Thou Wilt !*"—Chap. xxvi, 36 to 44. And when Peter, in the warmth of his zeal in defence of his beloved MASTER, wounded with a sword One of the Servants of the High Priest, sent to arrest and bring JESUS before the Roman Governor, our SAVIOUR Said to him, "*Put up thy sword into the sheath ! The Cup, Which My FATHER hath Given Me, shall I not Drink It ?*" [John xviii, 10, 11.] which was a living proof, that of That Cup, though He could Drink, yet One of his most zealous Apostles was even unwilling that He should ; and, by all the Disciples on that trying Occasion deserting Him, that not One of them then would drink of That Cup of Extreme Misery. Eventually, however, Each of them did drink of the Cup, which The ALMIGHTY Suffered to be administered to Each ; and which, though containing a bitter mixture of suffering and persecution, yet how inconsiderable was the anguish of it in comparison with That of their Heavenly MASTER.

Similar observations, in effect, apply to the Baptism of CHRIST ; Which, as a Baptism of water, emblematical, as an outward sign of submissiveness to The DIVINE Will, in the fulness of Faith, seeks the Purifying Influence of The HOLY SPIRIT. Of this, Man could partake ; for this was simple and ceremonial : but of His Own Baptism JESUS Truly Said, "*I have a Baptism to be Baptized with ; and how am I Straitened, till it be Accomplished !*"—Luke xii, 50, 51. The Peculiarity of CHRIST'S Sacrifice by Baptism was the Connection with It of His Sacrifice by Death, as recorded of Him by St. John : "*THIS is He, That Came by Water and Blood, even JESUS CHRIST ; not by Water only, but by Water and Blood.*"—1 John v, 5, 6. This Baptism was with The HOLY GHOST, and with Power Proportionate to the Great Object of Universal Redemption, on the terms of a lively repentance and a vital faith Therein. The Baptism of the Apostles was finally, it is true, with The HOLY GHOST, and with sufficient power to remit Individuals' sins, to heal present infirmities, and to extend the Doctrine and Gospel of CHRIST, as DIVINE Wisdom Appointed.

In the Scheme of Providence, the General Dispensation of Rewards and Punishments is Reserved, as to the knowledge, as well as experience of It, for CHRIST'S Second Coming to Judge the World: and though in His Omniscience the Distribution, Which shall then Take place, was, even from the Beginning, Spiritually Present with and Privy to Him; yet did He not, at His First Coming, Make Known The DIVINE Purposes. But in His Gracious Condescension He Gives Encouragement to hope that the Fulness of His Favour, in Which is Life Eternal, will be Vouchsafed to the truly Faithful. *If so be that we suffer with CHRIST*, then have we also St. Paul's supporting assurance, *that we may be also Glorified together, as Children of GOD, and Joint-Heirs with CHRIST*.—Rom. viii, 17.

△ And when the Ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two Brethren. But JESUS Called them unto Him, and Said, "Ye know that the Princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them; and they, that are great, exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your Minister! and Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your Servant! even as The SON of Man Came not to be ministered unto, but to Minister, and to Give His Life a Ransom for Many."—24 to 28.

Amongst the Elect of CHRIST, and even in His Visual Presence, we here see instances of the evil that is in Man; for Some were the reverse of humble; Others yielded to envy and hatred: thus it is evident how utterly incapable Man is of himself to acquire that habit of holiness and heavenly-mindedness, without which None can see The Glories of The GODHEAD and live! But that the extirpation of evil and the growth and maturity of good in the heart, are of the Gift of GOD, by the Grace of The HOLY GHOST, received into the Soul as the first Fruits of The SAVIOUR'S Sacrifice and Intercession, freely Offered unto All, who, by repentance and faith, in meekness and humility, and with entire trust and confidence in the Power and Mercy of JEHOVAH, turn unto Him, and worship Him in spirit and in truth.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And when the Ten heard it, they began to be much displeased with James and John. But JESUS Called them to Him, and Saith unto them, "Ye know that they, which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles, exercise Lordship over them, and their great Ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you: but Whosoever will be great among you shall be your Minister; and Whosoever of you will be the chiefest shall be Servant of All. For even The SON of Man Came not to be ministered unto, but to Minister, and to Give His Life a Ransom for Many."*—Chap. x, 41 to 45.

St. Luke describes the same course of reasoning, though seemingly as Delivered by our SAVIOUR on another and later occasion, even after the Last Supper, thus: *And there was a strife among the Disciples, "Which of them should be Accounted the greatest."* And JESUS Said unto them, *"The Kings of the Gentiles exercise Lordship over them; and they, that exercise authority upon them, are called Benefactors. But ye shall not be so; but he, that is greatest among you, let him be as the Younger; and he, that is Chief, as he that doth serve! For whether is Greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? Is not he, that sitteth at meat? But I am among you, as he, that serveth!"*—Chap. xxii, 24 to 27.

The PRINCE of PEACE Hushed, with a Voice of Parental Benevolence, the jarring elements of discord in His Disciples' bosoms: though in all their intercourse with Him, they had found Him uniformly Meek and Lowly of Heart; yet did not the silent influence of Example always Prevail to Beget, unaided, a corresponding behaviour in His Followers: His Authority was occasionally necessarily Interposed; but it was the Authority of Wisdom Intro-

duced by Gentleness and Compassion: His Leading Doctrine Inculcated aversion to Worldly pomp and power and pleasure, with entire devotedness to the Will of GOD. To quiet the contest for superiority amongst His Disciples, He Pointed to the condition of the Heathen Nations, amongst whom despotic power prevailed, Touching briefly, but expressively, on the effects of it, and thence virtually Insisting that, as the principle of ambition and a thirst for power were against the Rule of Christian Faith and Practice, so should they be carefully avoided by Those, who sought to have Part in the Glories of The SAVIOUR'S KINGDOM.

In the World of Spirits, every Station will be gladly embraced by the Being Allotted to it; and, therefore, amongst Persons professing Spiritual belief and Christian hope in the Life that is, the same sentiment should prevail of cheerful acquiescence in The DIVINE Will, and the heart be led, in whatsoever state it is, therewith to be content. But Christianity is not confined to passive virtue: it is active in all purposes and works of charity and good-will to Man, as well as of piety towards GOD, and holy love towards The Adorable SAVIOUR. Its true Professor, therefore, in earnest hope, seeks for a communion with the Saints in Light, but is too sensible of his own demerits to harbour a momentary thought of superiority amongst them: the Joys of Heaven, as far as his Spiritual eye can contemplate them, are, in their lowest estimate, so immeasurably beyond any justifiable hope of obtaining them but through the Interposed Righteousness of CHRIST, that he would gladly close with the Assurance of having the very lowest Place in The KINGDOM of HEAVEN, to be but as a Door-Keeper There amongst the many Mansions of his HEAVENLY FATHER'S Household. The Christian knows that the Imparted Favour of The ALMIGHTY is Governed by Fixed and Invariable Rules, being Proportioned to the degree of faith, which that Christian himself actually possesses. In Heaven, where faith is swallowed up in fruition, the Paramount Excellence of The DIVINE NATURE in All Its Palpable Glories, and the Fruits of The SAVIOUR'S Love, Keep alive the Saints' wonder and adoration, and Form the exhaustless Objects of their meditation and delight; and the associated exultation of the Angelic Host swells the measure of the happiness of the Redeemed. No principle of unfriendly Rivalry can have access There; but All is Harmony and All is Peace: and Each exults in contributing to the general offering of worship and praise to The FOUNTAIN of Light and Life and All Things: and There will, doubtless, prevail every mutual office of pure and hallowed love. Such, even on Earth, is the impulse of a Heavenward temper; no striving for mastery, but over evil passions; no thirst for a name to emblazon historic heraldry; but an unceasing desire and an earnest endeavour to obtain a name in Heaven, Where alone Immortal Glory is to be found. The exhortation of St. Peter (when himself more advanced in the true Spirit of the Christian Faith,) addressed to Persons invested with commanding situations in the Church, illustrates this Doctrine: *The Elders, which are among you, I exhort, who am also an Elder, and a Witness of the Sufferings of CHRIST, and also a Partaker of the Glory That shall be Revealed, feed the Flock of GOD, which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being Lords over GOD'S Heritage; but being Ensamples to the Flock!*—1 Peter v, 1 to 3. And again to the Noviciates, *Likewise ye Younger, submit yourselves unto the Elder; yea, All of you be subject One to Another, and be clothed with humility! for GOD Resisteth the Proud; and Giveth Grace to the Humble. Humble yourselves, therefore, under the Mighty Hand of GOD, that He may Exalt you in due time!*—5, 6.

The love of the World is enmity with GOD; the love of Worldly distinc-

tion is hostile to the character of a true Believer in the Lowly and Persecuted JESUS: the imitation of Him is the proper sphere of a Christian's ambition; but in that sphere will he move without the slightest feeling of jealousy or envy; and, on the contrary, will, to the utmost of his power, strive to fulfil, in meekness and singleness of heart, the relative duties of his station, both as a Child of GOD, and a Member of the wide-spread Family of Man; and among those duties humility and Brotherly love rank very pre-eminently.


The condition of Servitude, so far from being despicable, is thus Declared to be even desirable, if it be undertaken from conscientious motives: as most remote from the pride of Life, it is, perhaps, of all others, the safest for the Human heart to move in; but as All cannot be Servants, the Admonition is here Offered by our SAVIOUR, how to use a Master's spirit; that they, who have rule, should be as those that serve, in humble and affable and beneficent dispositions, willing to communicate Spiritual as well as temporal good, and acting rather as Parents than Masters, administering, in return for the services rendered them, all consolation and support in infirmity and old age, as well as when deriving the largest measure of help from their Dependants in the maturity of their health and vigour.

The Example Set us by The HOLY JESUS, was most Signally and Uniformly That of humility of Heart and Life: His Precepts continually Exalted That Virtue as a characteristic of Christian Faith: He Himself, in Personal Attention to the Offices of Humility, Descended so low as to Fill the most menial Office of Washing His Own Disciples' feet: yea so Humble was He, as not only to Take upon Himself the Form and Nature of Man, but the degraded rank of a poor Mechanic's Son, and to be obedient unto Death as a reputed Blasphemer, that He might Make an end of sin, and Bring in Perfect Righteousness to that Nature. And after That Impressive Condescension in Stooping to wash His Disciples' feet, He Said unto them, "*Know ye What I have Done unto you? Ye call Me 'MASTER' and 'LORD!' and ye say well: for So I am. If I then, your LORD and MASTER, have Washed your feet, ye also ought to wash One Another's feet: for I have Given you an Example, that ye should do, as I have Done to you. Verily, Verily, I Say unto you, The Servant is not greater than his Lord; neither he, that is sent, greater than he, that sent him. If ye know These Things, happy are ye if ye do them.*"—John xiii, 12 to 17.

This principle of humility, as essential to the perfection of the Christian profession, is forcibly and beautifully inculcated by St. Paul throughout his Writings, but particularly in his Epistle to the Converts at Philippi, where he says, *If there be any Consolation in CHRIST, if any Comfort of Love, if any Fellowship of The SPIRIT, if any bowels, and mercies, fulfil ye my joy that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind! Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind let Each esteem Other better than themselves! Look not every Man on his own things; but every Man also on the things of Others! Let this Mind be in you, Which was also in CHRIST JESUS; Who, being in the Form of GOD, Thought it not robbery to be Equal with GOD; but Made Himself of no reputation, and Took upon Him the Form of a Servant, and was Made in the likeness of Man; and, being Found in Fashion as a Man, He Humbled Himself and Became Obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Cross.*—Phil. ii, 1 to 8. And in the same Apostle's Letter to Timothy, he wrote, *There is One GOD, and One MEDIATOR between GOD and Men, The Man CHRIST JESUS, Who Gave Himself A Ransom for All, to be Testified in due time.*—1 Tim. ii, 5, 6. And in his correspondence with Titus he wrote, *The Grace of GOD, That Bringeth Salvation, hath Appeared to all Men, Teaching us, that, denying ungodliness and Worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously,*

and godly in this present World; looking for That Blessed Hope, and the Glorious Appearing of The Great GOD and our SAVIOUR, JESUS CHRIST, Who Gave Himself for us, that He might Redeem us from all iniquity; and Purify unto Himself a peculiar People, zealous of good Works.—Titus ii, 11 to 14.

May we, as in the innocency and helplessness of Infancy, so receive JESUS, and, through Him, look unto The GOD and FATHER of us All for Acceptance and Glorification at His Own Good Time, and in His Own Graciously Appointed Measure! remembering that, as it is Appointed to us once to die, but after this the Judgment, so should we cherish in our Souls the Consoling Truth, that CHRIST was once Offered to Bear the sins of Many; and that unto them, who, in the fulness of faith, look for Him, shall He Appear the Second Time, without the Imputation of sin, unto Salvation.—Heb. ix, 27, 28.

And as They departed from Jericho, a great Multitude followed Him. And, behold, two blind Men, sitting by the way-side, when they heard that JESUS Passed by, cried out, saying, "Have Mercy on us, O LORD, Thou SON of David!" And the Multitude rebuked them, because they should hold their peace: but they cried the more, saying, "Have Mercy on us, O LORD, Thou SON of David!" And JESUS Stood Still, and Called them, and Said, "What will ye, that I shall Do unto you?" They say unto Him, "LORD, that our eyes may be opened!" So JESUS had Compassion on them, and Touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight; and they followed Him.—29 to 34. 

That faith is a Spiritual Gift to a willing and penitent and persevering heart, is evidenced in this instance of two Persons only having auricular representation of CHRIST'S Miracles, and yet believing Him to be The MESSIAH. And hence were they so importunate in their supplication for DIVINE Mercy and Power to be Extended towards them, notwithstanding the discouragement thrown in their way by the clamour of the Multitude attempting to silence them, from whatever motive in each Member of that Multitude that interruption might have proceeded. The blessing of sight, as well as of all the other senses, is seldom sufficiently considered or duly appreciated till it is lost: and then how natural is it forcibly to be led to think of The GIVER when the Gift is Withdrawn! But painful and distressing as is the privation of our organs of natural sight, how infinitely more dreadful in its effects, and how much more to be deprecated, is the darkness of Spiritual sight, which, if not Removed by faith in The SUN of Righteousness, can no otherwise be Removed, but will continue, through that blasting and blighting film of infidelity, upon the Soul's vision, shutting it out equally from Hope, as from Peace in Eternity as well as in Time. If, under a present sense and sorrow of and for that awful blindness, CHRIST is Sought by unfeigned and persevering prayer, though we have not access, like the Suppliants in the Text, to His Bodily Ear, yet is He ever Ready to Hear from Heaven, His Dwelling Place, and to Give Light and Life to the contrite and believing Soul, that putteth its trust in Him; and He will Impart the Illuminations of His HOLY SPIRIT to Turn its darkness into Light, and its sorrow into Rejoicing. This is the Light, Which we All indispensably need, and Which will Remain in the Soul, lasting as the coming Days of Heaven; when the natural vision shall be closed in the night of Death. This is the Polar Star of Truth, Whereby alone the Human Bark can be safely navigated amidst the quicksands of pleasure, the shoals of vanity and folly, and the destroying rocks of pride, to its desired Haven, the City of The LORD, in Which are the Mansions of Everlasting Peace Prepared for the Souls of the true Believers in CHRIST JESUS.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And They came to Jericho; and as JESUS Went out of Jericho with His Disciples, and a great number of People, blind*



*Bartimeus, the Son of Timeus, sat by the highway-side begging: and when he heard that it was JESUS of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, "JESUS, Thou SON of David, have Mercy on me!" And Many charged him, that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, "Thou SON of David, Have Mercy on me!" And JESUS Stood Still, and Commanded him to be called: and they call the blind Man, saying unto him, "Be of good comfort, rise: He Calleth thee!" And he, casting away his garments, rose, and came to JESUS: And JESUS Answered, and Said unto him, "What wilt thou that I should Do unto thee?" The blind Man said unto Him, "LORD, that I might receive my sight!" And JESUS Said unto him, "Go thy way! thy faith hath made thee whole." And immediately he received his sight; and followed JESUS in the way.—Chap. x, 46 to 52.*

The apparent inconsistency of the Populace, in first discouraging the Sufferer's seeking relief from JESUS, and in afterwards congratulating him, when Called to an audience with Him, Who Came as The Light of the World, is attributable to the devout reverence which was paid to Him by His Disciples, who patiently waited for, and did not importunately urge, by actual appeals on behalf of themselves or Others, fresh Proofs of His DIVINE Power and Beneficence; but rejoiced on every Occasion That Made them Witnesses of the Grace and Goodness of their LORD and MASTER.


△ St. Luke's account is as follows: *And it came to pass, that as JESUS was Come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind Man sat by the way-side begging: and, hearing the Multitude pass by, he asked what it meant: and they told him, that JESUS of Nazareth Passeth by. And he cried, saying, "JESUS, Thou SON of David, Have Mercy on me!" And they, which went before, rebuked him, that he should hold his peace: but he cried so much the more, "Thou SON of David, Have Mercy on Me!" And JESUS Stood, and Commanded him to be brought unto Him: and when he was come near, He Asked him, Saying, "What wilt thou that I shall Do unto thee?" And he said, "LORD, that I may receive my sight!" And JESUS Said unto him, "Receive thy sight! thy faith hath saved thee!" And immediately he received his sight, and followed Him, glorifying GOD: and All the People, when they saw it, gave praise unto GOD.—Chap. xviii, 35 to 43.*

The effect, both on the Blind Man and on the Multitude, in their giving Glory to GOD, was an earnest of the living quality of their faith in JESUS, as The Promised MESSIAH, as The SEED of the faithful Abraham, in Whom all the Nations of the Earth should be Blessed; and as The Fruit of the holy David's loins, That SON of his, Who was to Sit on His Father's Throne for ever. [See the observations on a similar Miracle recorded by St. Matthew, Chap. ix, 27 to 31.]

If the exercise of faith were controuled by the opinion of the World, how Few would be Saved! But vital faith overcometh the World, resting its hope on the Mercy of The ALMIGHTY and ETERNAL GODHEAD, through the Merits and Mediation of JESUS CHRIST; and seeking, by being instant in prayer, through Him, the Guidance and Assistance and Consolation of The HOLY SPIRIT.

Man weakly considers his natural wants the most important, because they are most palpable to and pressing on his natural senses; but this is an error, which it is the Gracious Office of CHRIST and His Gospel to Expose: for the light of the eye continueth only for a season, and that a very uncertain one, and, when possessed, may lead to evil and not to good; but Spiritual Light is That, Which Endureth unto Everlasting Life; and without Which the Soul cannot find a way to an entrance into The REDEEMER'S KINGDOM, and into the Joy of its LORD.

Wonderful as is the Restoration of sight, yet it is not more Miraculous than the first Formation of the organs of it; connected too, as it is, with the understanding and the will throughout all animated Nature: but even this is not sufficiently considered, and but rarely made a subject of pious gratitude. Still infinitely more Wondrous is That Power of The HOLY SPIRIT, Which Creates and Guides the Spiritual Sight, influencing the hearts of Those to do good, who have been accustomed to do evil, by Leading them to JESUS, The True PHYSICIAN of Souls, to be Healed of their infirmities and Renewed in their Spiritual Health, by Dissipating the mist from the darkened senses, and Removing the film of Satan and of the World from the Spiritual eye. And The Same GOD, Who Worketh All in All, is ever Ready and Willing, for His Dear SON'S Sake, thus in Mercy to Manifest His Power to the Enlightening and Healing and Animating, by His SPIRIT, All, who in faith cry unto Him, "Have Mercy on us, O LORD, and Open Thou our Spiritual eyes, that we may see, in the true Light, JESUS, That SON of David, as our Only and Effectual SAVIOUR!"

CHAP. xxi.—And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage,  unto the Mount of Olives, then Sent JESUS two Disciples, Saying unto them, "Go into the Village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto Me! And if any Man say ought unto you, ye shall say, 'The LORD hath Need of them!' and straightway he will send them." All this was done, that it might be Fulfilled, Which was spoken by the Prophet, [Zechariah ix, 9, and by Isaiah lxii, 11.] saying, "Tell ye the Daughter of Sion, Behold, thy KING Cometh unto thee, Meek, and Sitting upon an ass, and a colt, the foal of an ass." And the Disciples went and did as JESUS Commanded them, and brought the ass and the colt, and put on them their clothes; and they set Him thereon. And a very great Multitude spread their garments in the way: Others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed them in the way. And the Multitudes, that went before and that followed, cried saying, "Hosanna to The SON of David! Blessed is He That Cometh in the Name of The LORD! Hosanna in The Highest!" And when He was Come into Jerusalem, all the City was moved, saying, "Who is This?" And the Multitude said, "This is JESUS, The Prophet of Nazareth, of Galilee."—1 to 11.

The virtue of Humility was Inculcated not less by the Practice than the Precepts of our Blessed REDEEMER. Our SAVIOUR, Who Knew all things, Knew what was in Man and in beast too, that the Owner of the ass, whom, probably, He had never seen, would freely part from it, and that the ass itself would submit to be led and used by Strangers, and move passively on amidst the tumultuous shouts of the Multitude. The Prophets, foretelling the very animal to be Chosen by The SON of GOD to bear Him, as The SAVIOUR of Mankind, to Jerusalem, must have confirmed the general belief that He, Who Rode thereon, as PROPHET, PRIEST, and KING, must be The Promised MESSIAH; and hence the Hosannas to The SON of David! What a lesson this to divest the heart of pride and arrogance under any Visitation of the Human distinctions of State and Riches and Power. The KING of Kings, The LORD of Lords, with Whom were all Might, MAJESTY, and Dominion, had He then Chosen to Exert Them, even amidst the acclamations of the Multitude, and their right interpretation of His Character and Office, Entered Jerusalem upon an ass.

St. Mark's description is thus: *And when They came nigh to Jerusalem, unto Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, JESUS Sendeth forth Two of His Disciples, and Saith unto them, "Go your way into the Village over against you, and, as soon as ye be entered into it, ye shall find a colt tied, whereon never Man sat; loose him, and bring him: and if any Man say unto you, 'Why do ye this?' say ye, that 'The LORD hath Need of him!' and straightway he will send*

him hither." *And they went their way, and found the colt tied by the door without, in a Place ~~where~~ two ways met: and they loose him: and Certain of them, that stood there, said unto them, "What do ye loosing the colt?" And they said unto them even as JESUS had Commanded: and they let them go. And they brought the colt to JESUS, and cast their garments on him; and He Sat upon him. And Many spread their garments in the way, and Others cut down branches off the trees, and strawed them in the way: and they, that went before, and they, that followed, cried, saying, "Hosanna! Blessed is He, That Cometh in The Name of The LORD! Blessed be The Kingdom of our Father David, That Cometh in the Name of The LORD! Hosanna in the Highest!"*—Chap. xi, 1 to 10.

There is here only the natural difference in narrative of two Historians, the One recording, amongst an incalculable fund of wonderment, what most particularly struck him, the Other detailing what impression the relating by Others had left upon his mind. St. Matthew mentions the mother of the ass being with the foal, which is probable, from the foal being so young as not to have been previously used: St. Mark does not advert to this. St. Matthew, as probably, though with JESUS at the time, was not One of those Sent on the Errand, does not notice what St. Mark has related, the expostulating with the Disciples on their loosing the foal, though Foretold both in its occurrence and result. St. Matthew adverts to This Incident in the Life of JESUS, as the Fulfilment of one Prophetic Enunciation; but this St. Mark does not notice.

St. Luke's narrative, which is similar to that of St. Mark, is as follows: *And JESUS Went, Ascending up to Jerusalem: and it came to pass, when He was Come nigh to Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount called the Mount of Olives, He Sent Two of His Disciples, Saying, "Go ye into the Village over against you; in the which, at your entering, ye shall find a colt tied, wherupon yet never Man sat; loose him, and bring him hither! and if any Man ask you, 'Why do ye loose him?' thus shall ye say unto him, 'Because The LORD hath Need of him.'" And they, that were Sent, went their way, and found even as He had Said unto them: and, as they were loosing the colt, the Owners thereof said unto them, "Why loose ye the colt?" And they said, "The LORD hath need of him." And they brought him to JESUS: and they cast their garments upon the colt; and they set JESUS thereon. And as He Went, they spread their clothes in the way. And when He was Come nigh, even now at the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole Multitude of the Disciples began to rejoice and praise GOD with a loud voice for All the Mighty Works That they had seen; saying, "Blessed be The KING That Cometh in The Name of The LORD! Peace in Heaven and Glory in the Highest!" And Some of the Pharisees from among the Multitude said unto Him, "Master, rebuke thy Disciples!" And He Answered, and Said unto them, "I Tell you, that if These should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out."—Chap. xix, 28 to 40.*

How awful is it to contemplate, that Pharisaic pride and rejection of the Love of CHRIST, and aversion to the adoption of His Gracious Offer of Redemption, are not confined to the Age or Sect of the Pharisees, but still live as proverbially characteristic of a too prevailing haughtiness of heart and Self-sufficiency existing even in this our day!


△ St. John's narrative is still more circumstantial; and refering, as it does, to that affecting Miracle Wrought by JESUS on behalf of Lazarus and his Sisters. Which is not noticed by the other Evangelists, it is here introduced: *Now a certain Man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the Town of Mary and her Sister Martha; (it was that Mary, which anointed The LORD with ointment, and wiped His Feet with her hair, whose Brother Lazarus was sick,) therefore his Sisters sent unto Him, saying, "LORD, behold, he, whom Thou Lovest, is sick!" When*

US Heard that, He Said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the Glory OF, that The SON of GOD might be Glorified thereby!" Now JESUS and Martha and her Sister and Lazarus. When He had Heard, therefore, that as sick, He Abode two days still in the same Place, where He was: then, after Saith He to His Disciples, "Let us Go into Judea again!" His Disciples unto Him, "MASTER, the Jews of late sought to stone Thee! and Goest thou thither again?" JESUS Answered, "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any Man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of World: but if a Man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him!" These Things Said He: and after that He Saith unto them, "Our Brother Lazarus sleepeth; but I Go, that I may Awake him out of sleep!" Then His Disciples, "LORD, if he sleep, he shall do well!" Howbeit, JESUS knew of his death; but they thought that He had Spoken of taking of rest in sleep. JESUS Said unto them plainly, "Lazarus is dead! and I am Glad for your sakes, that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe: nevertheless, let Us go to him!" Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his Fellow Disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him!" Then, when JESUS Came, Found that he had lain in the grave four days already. Now Bethany was unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off: and Many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their Brother. Then Martha, as she heard that JESUS was Coming, went and met Him: but Mary sat in the house: then said Martha unto JESUS, "LORD, if Thou hadst been here, my Brother had not died: but I know, that even now, Whatsoever Thou wilt of GOD, GOD will Give It Thee." JESUS Saith unto her, "Thy Brother shall rise again." Martha saith unto Him, "I know that he shall rise again in the Resurrection at the Last Day." JESUS Said unto her, "I am The RESURRECTION, and The LIFE! he, that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and Whosoever liveth and believeth in Me, shall never die! Believest thou This?" She saith unto Him, "Yea, LORD! I believe that Thou art The Christ, The SON of GOD, Which should Come into the World." And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary, her Sister, secretly, saying, "The MASTER is Come, and Calleth for thee." As soon as she heard that, she came quickly, and came unto Him. Now JESUS was not yet Come into the house; but was in that Place, where Martha met Him. The Jews then, which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily went out, followed her, saying, "She goeth unto the grave to weep there." When Mary was come where JESUS was, and saw Him, she fell down at His Feet, saying unto Him, "LORD, if Thou hadst been here, my Brother had not died." When JESUS, therefore, Saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping, He came with her, He Groaned in the Spirit, and was Troubled, and Said, "Where have ye laid him?" They said unto Him, "LORD, Come and See!" JESUS Wept!!! Then said the Jews, "Behold, how He Loved him!" And some of them said, "Could not this Man, which opened the eyes of the Blind, have said that even this Man should not have died?" JESUS, therefore, again coming in Himself, Cometh to the grave: it was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. JESUS Said, "Take ye away the stone!" Martha, the Sister of him that was dead, saith unto Him, "LORD, by this time he stinketh; for he hath been dead four days!" JESUS Saith unto her, "Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the Glory of GOD?" Then they took away the stone from the Place, where the Dead was laid. And JESUS Lifted up His Eyes, and said, "FATHER, I Thank Thee, that Thou hast Heard Me: and I Knew that thou Hearest Me Always: but because of the People, which stand by, I Said It, that they may believe that Thou hast Sent Me!" And when He thus had Spoken,

*He Cried with a loud Voice, "Lazarus, come forth!" And he, that was dead, came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes; and his face was bound about with a napkin. JESUS Saith unto them, "Loose him, and let him go!" Then Many of the Jews, which came to Mary, and had seen the Things Which JESUS Did, believed on Him. But Some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them What Things JESUS had Done. Then gathered the Chief Priests and the Pharisees a Council, and said, "What do we? for this Man doeth many Miracles: if we let him thus alone, all Men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come, and take away both our Place and Nation." And One of them, named Caiaphas, being the High Priest that same year, said unto them, "Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us that one Man should die for the People; and that the whole Nation perish not." And this spake he not of himself, but being High Priest that year, he prophesied that JESUS should Die for that Nation: and not for that Nation only, but that also He should Gather together in One the Children of GOD that were scattered abroad. Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put Him to death. JESUS, therefore, Walked no more Openly among the Jews; but Went thence unto a Country near to the Wilderness, into a City called Ephraim, and there Continued with His Disciples. And the Jews' Passover was nigh at hand; and Many went out of the Country up to Jerusalem before the Passover, to purify themselves. Then sought they for JESUS, and spake among themselves, as they stood in the Temple, "What think ye, that He will not Come to the Feast?" Now both the Chief Priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that, if any Man knew where He were, he should shew it, that they might take Him. Then JESUS, six days before the Passover, Came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, which had been dead, whom He Raised from the Dead: there they made Him a supper; and Martha served; but Lazarus was One of them that sat at the table with Him. Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the Feet of JESUS, and wiped His Feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment. Then saith One of His Disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's Son, which should betray Him, "Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the Poor?" Thus he said, not that he cared for the Poor, but because he was a Thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein. Then Said JESUS, "Let her alone: against the Day of My Burying hath she kept this: for the Poor always ye have with you; but Me ye have not always!" Much People of the Jews, therefore, knew that He was there; and they came, not for JESUS' Sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom He had Raised from the Dead. But the Chief Priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death; because that by reason of him, Many of the Jews went away, and believed on JESUS. On the next day, much People that were come to the Feast, when they heard that JESUS was Coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet Him, and cried, "Hosanna! Blessed is The KING of Israel, That Cometh in the Name of The LORD!" And JESUS, when He had Found a young ass, Sat thereon, as it is Written, "Fear not, Daughter of Sion, behold, thy KING Cometh, Sitting on an ass's colt." [Zech. ix, 9.] These Things understood not His Disciples at the first; but when JESUS was Glorified, then remembered they that These Things were Written of Him, and that they had done These Things unto Him. The People, therefore, that was with Him when He Called Lazarus out of his grave, and Raised him from the Dead, bare record. For this cause the People also met Him; for that they heard that He had Done This Miracle. The Pharisees, therefore, said among themselves, "Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the World is gone after Him."—St. John xi, and xii, to v. 19.*

*This Miracle of peculiar Tenderness and Love towards the Sisters Martha*

and Mary, in Restoring to them their endeared Brother, when JESUS Himself was so soon to be Taken from them, was an Act of Grace in beautiful harmony with the Higher Object our SAVIOUR had in Manifesting His DIVINE Power, in His Ascendancy over Death itself, when He Chose to Exercise It by Commanding the Grave to give up its Dead, and Restoring both life and health to its Victim. Such an evident Display of Authority even over Departed Spirits, Manifested under such peculiar circumstances of impressiveness and attraction, was well Calculated to Sustain the drooping spirits and fainting hopes of His Disciples and Followers generally, at a period so fraught with trial to their feelings and fears, when He Himself should be Consigned to Death, and Made the Tenant of the Tomb. Martha's faith shone pre-eminently forth on this occasion, when she said, "*I know that even now, Whatsoever Thou wilt Ask of GOD, GOD will Give It Thee!*" an utterance which led on to That Heart-cheering and Soul-enlivening Assertion of JESUS, that "*I am The RESURRECTION and The LIFE! and Whosoever believeth in Me shall never die.*" A Truth Which Martha confidently expressed her belief in, and Which drew from her this confession, "*I believe, LORD, that Thou art The CHRIST, The SON of GOD, Which should Come into the World.*" What could be the Cause, that drew Tears from The SAVIOUR of the World, and that too, at the very time when He was about to Diffuse unlooked-for joy of heart throughout a Family, all the Members of which were peculiarly the Objects of His Affectionate Regard? Could it be that He Thought of the many Bodies, which, when Called from the tombs, would, in the Resurrection, and at the Judgment Which He Himself would have to Pronounce upon them, be doomed to the Resurrection unto Condemnation?

How infatuating and blinding to the clearest evidence is that prejudice,  which pride engenders in the Human mind! the Chief Priests and Pharisees, instead of making the report of Such an unprecedented Miracle as a Restoration to Life, (after decomposition must have been supposed to have begun,) the occasion of pausing in their career of resistance to a Power so entirely Supernatural, and forming a Council to investigate, with the deepest earnestness, the Prophecies That Characterized the then generally expected MESSIAH, assembled for the only object of opposing JESUS, and, by every means, even the subornation of perjury, and the perpetration of further murder in the death of Lazarus, to overwhelm Him with destruction. Even the High Priest saw, with a jaundiced eye, the necessity of an Expiatory Sacrifice by Blood for the Redemption of GOD'S Chosen People, and yet would not admit that Such Sacrifice, to be Effectual, must be Made by The SON of GOD, Who had been Foretold should Come into the World.

The spreading the garments and boughs of trees was indicative of high and holy rejoicing amongst the Jewish Nation; indeed the latter was of positive Institution by the Levitical Law, in the commemoration of particular festivals, as in the feast of Harvest, enjoining, that *when the Jews had gathered in the fruit of the Land, in the fifteenth day of the seventh month, they should keep a feast unto The LORD seven days; on the first day a Sabbath, and on the eighth day a Sabbath; and they were to take, on the first day, the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees and willows of the brook; and the People were to rejoice before The LORD, their GOD, seven days.*—Lev. xxiii, 39, 40. On the proclaiming the accession of their Kings, the spreading of garments was resorted to in manifestation of their reverence and devotedness. And the adoption of these free-will offerings by the Populace in honour of JESUS, when associated with the words in the 9th verse of the Text, borrowed, as they were, from the Prophetic Delineation, by David, of The MESSIAH, in the cxviii Ps., v. 26,

leaves no room to doubt the belief of the Populace in JESUS as The MESSIAH, The SON of The Living GOD. And shall we, to whom, equally, as to the Jews, Redemption is Offered by the Coming and Sacrifice in the Flesh of The SON of GOD, be less sensible of the Blessing, or less loud and open in expressing that sense in gratitude for Such Inestimable Benefit? Indeed, Blessed, Everlastingly Blessed should He be, Who Left the Mansions of Heavenly Joy, and Perfect Holiness and Purity and Peace, Taking upon Himself the comparatively loathsome Nature of Man, contaminated by the odious pollutions of a World of sinfulness in every possible variety and degree, and Becoming Obedient unto Death, even the death of the Cross, that He might Rescue us from the grasp of Satan and the Second Death, and might Restore us to the Image of our MAKER, and Obtain for us His Pardon and Reconciliation. How unutterably exulting to the contemplation of the devout and contrite and believing Soul is This Mysterious Work of DIVINE Mercy! To us, equally as to Those, who saw and gratefully hailed The Very GOD as Man, The HOLY JESUS, Triumphant through Humility, even unto us in The Same Gracious Condescending and Accessible Character He Comes in The SPIRIT, Willing to be our KING and SAVIOUR. O may we bless Him with reverential thankfulness in this our brief, uncertain span of Being here, and proclaim His Praise in pure devotion of heart and dedication of life; that He may Bless us for ever Hereafter in The Presence of His FATHER and our FATHER, and of His GOD and our GOD, in the Endless Life to Come!

How awfully pleasing a Spectacle must this have been to those, who, through the Influence of a lively faith in CHRIST, as The SON of The Living GOD, not only were Witnesses themselves of His Acting as GOD, and so had their own faith fully confirmed, but were rejoiced by the spread of that same saving faith over the Souls of Others! It was thus that the Lowly JESUS, with a Power far More than Kingly, Manifested, not the littleness of Earthly pomp and grandeur, but, in The Spirit of Peace and Good-will to Man, the Power of GOD over Death and the Grave: thus Reigning in the hearts of the Multitude that attended Him, by the true Greatness and Excellence of His Acts, as by the profound Wisdom of His Doctrine. Many, it is true, regarded Him but as a Prophet, as appears by Passages in the Gospel narrative; for not only here is He styled "*The Prophet of Nazareth*;" but on His reanimating the Corpse of the Son of the Widow of Nain, and shewing him alive to the People, they said, that a *Great Prophet is risen up among us, and that GOD hath Visited His People*.—Luke vii, 16. And it is natural, that by the uneducated Part of His Audience, who could not read, and had only such Parts of the Scriptures laid open and expounded to them, as adapted themselves to the prevailing prejudices of the Priests, such an impression should be received. Others of the People did regard Him as The True MESSIAH, and when challenged for the grounds of their belief, they answered promptly, and interrogatively, and which silenced, if it did not satisfy their Inquirers, *When CHRIST Cometh, will He do more Miracles than these, which this Man hath done?*—John vii, 25. 27. 31.

△ And JESUS Went into the Temple of GOD, and Cast out all them, that sold and bought in the Temple, and Overthrew the tables of the Money Changers, and the seats of them that sold doves; and Said unto them, "It is Written, [Isa. lvi, 7.] *MY House shall be called 'The House of Prayer!'* but ye have made It a den of Thieves!"—12, 13.

The degeneracy and apostacy of the Jews are most glaringly exemplified by this gross pollution of the Temple of GOD. What a condition was this for the Favoured People of The MOST HIGH to be Found in, on the Visitation of their

MESSIAH, their DELIVERER, and their Spiritual KING! And yet how Many are there in this our day of Meridian Illumination and Spiritual Knowledge, who, in the Temple of JEHOVAH and in the Avowed Church of CHRIST, exhibit manners utterly at variance with holy worship, and occupy their minds with schemes either of worldly aggrandizement or of sensual gratification! The Firmness Manifested by our SAVIOUR, on this occasion, Shews that there are seasons, when the passive and, generally, placable and quiescent character of Christianity should exert itself in the resistance of unholy exercises, when the Sanctuary of The LORD is profaned, and His Holy Name blasphemed. Toleration or Indifference then becomes criminal, and, virtually, amounts to a denial of That GOD, on Whom our Everlasting Destinies Depend, and Who, in strict Justice, might Openly Deny us, when in The PERSON of His SON He Cometh to Judge Righteous Judgment. And, Oh, how awful is it to contemplate what would be the Effect of such a Denial, even an Expulsion from the Favour of GOD, and the Glory of His Power.

St. Mark's description is as follows: *And JESUS and His Disciples Come to Jerusalem: and JESUS Went into the Temple, and Began to Cast out them that sold and bought in the Temple, and Overthrew the tables of the Money-Changers, and the seats of them that sold doves; and would not Suffer that any Man should carry any vessel through the Temple; and He Taught, Saying unto them, "Is it not Written, MY House shall be called of all Nations, 'The House of Prayer!' but ye have made It a den of Thieves!"*—Chap. xi, 15 to 17.

St. Luke's is more concise: *And JESUS Went into the Temple, and Began to Cast out them that sold therein, and them that bought, Saying unto them, "It is Written, [Isa. lvi, 7,] 'MY House is the House of Prayer;' but ye have made It a den of Thieves!"*—Chap. xix, 45, 46.

St. John also notices this Circumstance in these words: *And the Jews' Passover was at hand; and JESUS Went up to Jerusalem, and Found in the Temple Those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the Changers of money sitting; and, when He had Made a scourge of small cords, He Drove them all out of the Temple, and the sheep and the oxen; and Poured out the Changers' money, and Overthrew the tables; and Said unto them that sold doves, "Take these things hence! Make not My FATHER'S House an house of merchandize!" And His Disciples remembered that it was Written, [Ps. lxxix, 9,] "The zeal of Thine House hath eaten me up."* [John ii, 13 to 17.]

Whether the scourge was to drive the cattle, or to chastise any Persons that might offer insult or resistance, may be questionable; but, in the latter case, the Example of the Meek and Lowly and Suffering JESUS shews that firmness and the strongest remonstrance are justifiable, when the Honour of GOD and the Purity of His Worship are set at nought. And often does The HOLY SPIRIT still Strike upon the consciences of such Offenders, and so Chastise the insults offered to The Invisible GOD! The concluding quotation from the Psalms, as Prophetic of the Influence of The SAVIOUR'S Holy Zeal for His FATHER'S Honour, Extending even to His Working up His Meek Spirit to the act and exercise of Personal Severity, is a Call to us, as professing to follow CHRIST in all things, to manifest a similar zeal and firmness, as occasion and opportunity seem to justify our doing so.

The description referred to of *The House of GOD*, as denominated "*the House of Prayer*," is thus introduced by the Prophet Isaiah: *Thus Saith The LORD, "Keep ye judgment, and do justice! for My Salvation is Near to Come, and My Righteousness to be Revealed! Blessed is the Man that doeth this; and the Son of Man, that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it; and keepeth his hand from doing any evil! Neither let the Son of the Stranger, that*



*hath joined himself to The LORD, speak, saying, 'The LORD hath utterly Separated me from His People.' Neither let the Eunuch say, 'Behold, I am a dry tree!' For thus Saith The LORD unto the Eunuchs, that keep My Sabbaths, and choose the Things, That Please Me, and take hold of My Covenant, Even unto them will I Give, in Mine House and within My Walls, a Place and a Name, better than of Sons and of Daughters! I will Give them an Everlasting Name, that shall not be cut off. Also the Sons of the Stranger, that join themselves to The LORD, to serve Him, and to love The Name of The LORD, to be His Servants every One, that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of My Covenant, even them will I Bring to My Holy Mountain, and Make them joyful in My House of Prayer: their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices shall be Accepted upon Mine Altar; for Mine House shall be called 'An House of Prayer for All People.'"—Isa. lvi, 1 to 7.*

The shocking perversion of the Temple of the LORD, Hallowed by Such Signal Marks of His Peculiar Influence and Favour, marked the low state of the influence of Religion in that day, and the compromising spirit even of the Priests, who probably yielded to bribery their acquiescence in such pollutions of the House of GOD. But unhappily the same spirit of desecration was not peculiar to that day, for Some, even of the early Professors of Christianity, converted both the place and season of the very Sacrament, intended to commemorate the Great Sacrifice of The LAMB of GOD for the sins of the World, into an opportunity for gratifying their sensual indulgencies. In the time of Jeremiah the Prophet, similar iniquity seems to have prevailed amongst the Jews; and the Language Used by our SAVIOUR in the Text, seems to have been Gathered from the Prophet's description of his Countrymen at that period: *Thus Saith The LORD of HOSTS, The GOD of Israel, "Behold, All ye of Judah, ye trust in lying words, that cannot profit! Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods, whom ye know not, and come and stand before Me in This House, Which is Called by My Name, and say, 'We are delivered to do all these abominations?' Is This House, Which is Called by My Name, become a den of Robbers in your eyes? Behold, even I have Seen it," Saith The LORD.*—Chap. vii, 2, 3. 8 to 11.

And the Blind and the Lame came to Him in the Temple; and He Healed them.—14.

Works of Mercy, as well as Words of adoration and thanksgiving and supplication, are thus Pointed out and Sanctified by the Example of JESUS, as becoming occupations, where opportunity presents them for exercise, even in a day and in a Place of Public Worship; for it is thus, that are harmoniously blended, Glory to GOD in The Highest, and on Earth good-will and the fruits thereof to our Fellow-Mortals: "*Come unto Me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and ye shall find Rest unto your Souls!*" were the Words of Gracious Invitation and of Assured Comfort Uttered by our Blessed REDEEMER, but Addressed to Those of every Rank and every Age and Generation; and His Life on Earth was one Uninterrupted Exemplification of Doctrine so Abounding with Mercy. The Blind and The Lame came to Him in the fulness of faith in His Power, to Heal them; and, because they had faith, He Shed Healing on them from the Wings of His Mercy.

*Behold, (said the Prophet Isaiah, xxxv, 4, 5, 6,) your GOD will Come and Save you: then the eyes of the Blind shall be Opened, and the ears of the Deaf shall be Unstopped: then shall the lame Man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the Dumb sing.*

and when the Chief Priests and Scribes saw the Wonderful Things That He Did; and the Children crying in the Temple and saying, "Hosanna to The SON of David!" they were sore displeased, and said unto Him, "Hearest thou what These say?" And JESUS Saith unto them, "Yea! Have ye never read, 'Out of the mouth of Babes and Sucklings Thou hast Perfected Praise?' [Ps. viii, 2.]"—15, 16.

The Chief Priests and Scribes could not openly deny the propriety of the temple of DIVINE worship being cleared of such unhallowed obtrusions as money-changings and market dealings; and they must have felt it as an indirect buke of themselves for suffering it, CHRIST having, in the presence of such a multitude of the People, at once, and with an Authority such as the Priests might have ought to have exercised, Put down by a strong Hand such indecencies and interruptions. With hearts swelled with spiritual pride, and seeking, indirectly, perhaps, their own inordinate gains, which were, probably, promoted by their quiescence in such abuses, and by the contributions which grew out of the ready supply to the Votaries and Officers at the Temple, they, in the littleness and perversity of their hearts and minds, instead of admitting that the removal of such palpable inconsistencies with the pure worship of GOD was desirable, tempted to screen themselves by giving a different direction to the thoughts and feelings of the Multitude around, and bringing forward an accusation of aspersion against JESUS for Suffering Himself to be hailed as The MESSIAH. Such Movers of sedition against The KING of Heaven and of Earth, and who, amidst the infatuation of pride and deep-rooted prejudice, held themselves up as the only infallible Teachers both of the Law and the Prophets, our Blessed SAVIOUR'S Answer was at once a Manifestation both of His Wisdom and DIVINITY: He Quoted, from the Prophecies of David, [Ps. viii, 2,] a Passage precisely Prophetical of that very Event, and then Left them to digest It. And the Chief Priests and Scribes were unable to answer Him; but, though conundred even to silence, their hearts were too hardened to yield ingenuously to conviction, or to seek, by prayer, The DIVINE Direction of their judgment on this vital a Point, as receiving or rejecting JESUS, as The REDEEMER and the Very SON of GOD. The meekness, simplicity, docility, and innocence of children, elsewhere brought forward to illustrate the requisite qualifications of a DIVINELY Directed Heart, should influence us to seek a like teachableness and humility of Spirit, when approaching the contemplation, whether by prayer or praise, of The DIVINE NATURE in the Wonders of Its Power and Wisdom and Goodness, and especially in Its Gracious Dealings by Creation and Redemption towards Mankind. The Chief Priests and Scribes were, evidently, afraid to address the People, who were so gladly listening to JESUS, and ought, therefore, to make Him the Instrument of checking their hallowed praise, by urging Him to admit that the People were casting on Him a Character which belonged, in their assumption, to Another; for He had before Spoke of the temple as His FATHER'S House, thus, in effect, Asserting Himself to be The SON of GOD; and the Voices of Salutation did, virtually, the same in hailing Him as The SON of David, Who was to Sit upon His FATHER'S Throne forever; and upon Whose Shoulders was to be the Government of the Spiritualized Israel, and Who was to Reign in the hearts of the truly Faithful everlastingly.

St. Mark thus adverts to this Incident: *And the Scribes and Chief Priests heard the before-quoted Saying of JESUS, (that what should have been the house of Prayer, had been made a den of Thieves,) and they sought how they might destroy Him; for they feared Him, because all the People were astonished at His Doctrine.*—Chap. xi, 17, 18.

And He Left them, and Went out of the City into Bethany; and He Lodged there. Now in the morning, as He Returned into the City, He Hungered; and when He Saw a fig-tree in the way, He Came to it, and Found nothing thereon but leaves only, and Said unto it, "Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever!" And presently the fig-tree withered away. And when the Disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, "How soon is the fig-tree withered away!" JESUS Answered, and Said unto them, "Verily I Say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this, which is Done to the fig-tree, but also, if ye shall say unto this Mountain, 'Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the Sea,' it shall be done. And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive."—17 to 22.

Notwithstanding the exalted Character, proclaimed by the People in Jerusalem, of JESUS, as Coming in The Name of The LORD, the accommodation neither of a House nor even of a bed seems to have been offered Him there; and He, therefore, in the evening, Retired to His Favourite Village and the Society of Lazarus and Mary and Martha in Bethany; and there The LORD of the Universe Sojourned.

St. Mark relates that *When JESUS had Looked round about upon all things, and now the eventide was come, He Went out unto Bethany with the Twelve.*—Chap. xi, 11.

The tree thus Condemned by our SAVIOUR for its unfruitfulness, and Struck with death at the mere Utterance of His Word, offers an awful lesson of what will await the Soul, if unfruitful in faith and works, when The LORD will Pronounce His Judgment upon it. And the Assurance Given by Him, as to the efficacy of a vital and fruitful faith in a desire to serve and please GOD and JESUS CHRIST, Who Gave Himself for us, is consoling to the heart amidst every experience of earthly privation, that there is Reserved for the Faithful, a power equal to their will, when the Light and Life of Immortality break out upon them. The continued expression and manner of astonishment uttered and manifested by the Apostles on every Miracle Wrought by JESUS, even on One comparatively so unimportant as that of an unprofitable tree perishing at His Mere Word, is surprising, and shews, in a striking and impressive manner, the indisposition of the Human Heart to surrender itself wholly and at once to the Omnipresence and Omnipotence of GOD, Equally Capable of Withdrawing as of Imparting life. Whether this Promised faculty was personally Limited to the Apostles or Immediate Disciples of CHRIST, or is the essential effect and fruit of a perfect fulness of Faith, attainable, though never yet attained, by Others, may be doubted: if the latter, it is an exercise of the Imparted Power, a virtual Direction of the Omnipotence of GOD, Dwelling within the Sanctified Soul of Man. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous Man availeth much; but with the degree of faith adequate to the attainment of every proper object of prayer, there is in the most Pious a diffidence of publicly assuming it: in the silent communings with its GOD, the heart of the Christian trusts to the receiving it as the immediate Gift of The HOLY GHOST; a Gift That is never Withheld from the Meek and Lowly, the Contrite and Believing Soul; and every fresh instance of its reception and efficacy only awakens a more animating spirit of gratitude and resignation, and a desire to seek, in the prayer put forth, only what may best accord with The DIVINE Will to Grant; and by no means excites a presumptive confidence that, because the fruit of one prayer has been gathered, therefore an equal result may invariably be expected from others.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And on the morrow, when They were Come from Bethany, JESUS was Hungry; and Seeing a fig-tree afar off, having leaves, He Came, if haply He might Find any thing thereon: and when He Came to it, He Found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet: and JESUS Answered, and Said unto it, "No Man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever!"*

and His Disciples heard It. And on the following morning, as They Passed by, they saw the fig-tree dried up from the roots: and Peter, calling to remembrance, saith unto Him, "*MASTER, behold, the fig-tree, which Thou Cursedst, is withered away!*" And JESUS Answering, Saith unto them, "*Have faith in GOD! For Verily I Say unto you, That Whosoever shall say unto this Mountain, 'Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the Sea!' and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things, which he saith, shall come to pass, he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I Say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.*"—Chap. xi, 12 to 14. 20 to 24.

Though the general season for ripeness of figs had not arrived, yet in this tree there was not even any shew for fruit, though so full of leaves. But the Lesson Inculcated by our SAVIOUR'S Dealing towards it, was and is a profitable one, that every professing Christian should not rest in profession only, but strive to bring forth fruits meet for repentance unto righteousness. Great as was the Power thus Pledged by JESUS unto the Faithful amongst His Followers, who can justly doubt of its proving effectual, where faith, in all its fullness, lays the foundation, and Wisdom from Above directs its application?

In St. Luke we have the record that *the Apostles*, on one occasion, said unto *The LORD*, "*Increase our faith!*" And *The LORD Said*, "*If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, 'Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the Sea!' and it should obey you.*"—Chap. xvii, 5, 6.

But Faith, as it is the Gift of GOD for CHRIST'S Sake, so should be the employment of it under the Guidance and to the Honour of GOD, and the well-being of our Fellow-Mortals, after the Example of our Blessed LORD and MASTER, as having Salvation and Eternal Happiness for its end and aim.

See the observations on Chap. xvii, 20.

On the efficacy of Faith as a means, when perseveringly relied upon in humility and sincerity, of DIVINE Assistance, St. James thus forcibly and beautifully speaks in his address to his Countrymen of the true Israelitish persuasion, and through them to all succeeding Generations both of Jews and Gentiles, who read the Word of GOD, and keep It: *My Brethren, count it all joy, when ye fall into divers temptations! knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience; but let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing! If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of GOD, That Giveth to all Men Liberally, and Upbraideth not! And it shall be Given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering; for he, that wavereth, is like a wave of the Sea, driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that Man think that he shall receive any thing of The LORD! A double-minded Man is unstable in all his ways.*—James i, 1 to 8.

Of the great power and property of Faith St. Paul also speaks incidentally, when expatiating on its inutility towards the Work of Salvation, unless associated with its essential fruits, purity and righteousness and holiness of Life and conversation, saying, *Though I have all Faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing:* [1 Cor. xiii, 2.] afterwards shewing that Charity, in its right exemplification, is the full portraiture of the Christian Character. [See the observations on Chapter vii, 7.] The same obvious truth of the inefficiency of that spurious faith, which is neither derived from nor tends to GOD, is inculcated thus by the much-loved Apostle, St. John, when, after expatiating on the boundlessness of GOD'S Love to us, he says, in the affectionate persuasiveness of Parental admonition, *My little Children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth; and hereby we know that we are of the Truth, and shall assure our hearts before GOD. For, if our heart con-*

denn us, *GOD is Greater than our heart, and Knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward GOD; and whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His Commandments, and do those things that are Pleasing in His Sight: and This is His Commandment, "That we should believe on The Name of His SON JESUS CHRIST, and love One Another," as He Gave us Commandment. And he, that keepeth His Commandments, dwelleth in Him, and He in him; and hereby we know that He Abideth in us, by The SPIRIT, Which He hath Given us!*—1 John iii, 18 to 24. And again, *He, that hath The SON, hath Life; and he, that hath not The SON of GOD, hath not Life! These things have I written unto you, that believe on the Name of The SON of GOD, that ye may know that ye have Eternal Life, and that ye may believe on the Name of The SON of GOD. And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask any thing according to His Will, He Heareth us: and if we know that He Hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him.*—1 John v, 12 to 15.

Thus is it that true and vital Faith in CHRIST, working by obedience through humility and patience and holy love, accomplisheth for us, what is the efficacy of all legitimate prayer, the Everlasting Favour of The GODHEAD in the Life to Come, even if It be, to outward appearances, Withheld from us in the Life that is, as being Strangers to this World's joys or its comforts, though never denied the Sustaining Influence of the Christian's hope.

△ And when He was Come into the Temple, the Chief Priests and the Elders of the People came unto Him, as He was Teaching, and said, "By what Authority doest thou these things? and Who gave thee this Authority?" And JESUS Answered, and Said unto them, "I also will Ask you one thing, which, if ye tell Me, I, in like wise, will Tell you by What Authority I Do these Things! The baptism of John, Whence was it? from HEAVEN? or of Men?" And they reasoned with themselves, saying, "If we shall say, From HEAVEN! He will say unto us, 'Why did ye not then believe him?' But if we shall say, Of Men! we fear the People; for All hold John as a Prophet:" and they answered JESUS, and said, "We cannot tell!" And He Said unto them, "Neither Tell I you by What Authority I Do these Things."—23 to 27.

The persecuting spirit of the Votaries of pride and Self-sufficiency was restlessly employed in assailing, by violence or cunning, the growing Influence of The MESSIAH; but, on every occasion, the weakness and absurdity of Human reasoning, when opposed to The DIVINE Wisdom, was glaringly and unanswerably manifest. Instead of weighing, impartially, the nature and effects of the Works Displayed and of the Doctrine Taught by JESUS; and striving, by a dispassionate examination of Recorded Prophecy and Holy Writ, in reference to Him, to judge whether They were of GOD or Man; their only aim and effort were to get Him rejected and despised by the People, and to prevent His Overthrowing, by His Purer and Holier Example and Precepts, their abused and misdirected guidance and power, They question Him, therefore, of the Authority He Acted under, not looking forward to, or even surmising, the confounding Answer, That would be Made by Him, Who Spake as never Man spake; their reason being blinded, as all reason cannot otherwise than be, when surrendered to the influence of pride and prejudice and worldly-mindedness, in any of their infatuating shapes.

The account given by St. Mark is as follows: *And They came again to Jerusalem; and as JESUS was Walking in the Temple, there came to Him the Chief Priests and the Scribes and the Elders, and say unto Him, "By What Authority doest thou these things? and Who gave thee this Authority to do these things?" And JESUS Answered, and Said unto them, "I will also Ask of you one Question; and answer Me! and I will Tell you by What Authority I Do these Things!"*

*The Baptism of John! Was it from Heaven? or of Men? Answer Me!" And they reasoned with themselves, saying, "If we shall say, From Heaven! he will say, 'Why then did ye not believe him?' But if we shall say, Of Men! they feared the People: for all Men counted John, that he was a Prophet indeed:" and they answered, and said unto JESUS, "We cannot tell." And JESUS Answering, Saith unto them, "Neither do I Tell you by What Authority I Do These Things!"—Chap. xi, 27 to 33.*

The testimony thus indirectly borne, by these cavilling and arrogant Elders of the Jewish Church, to the Prophetic Mission of the Baptist John, is, virtually, corroborative of The DIVINE Character of JESUS, of Whom John predicated that *He would Baptize with The HOLY GHOST*; and in comparison with Whom he counted himself as nothing; though of *All born of Women, None had arisen greater than John*. This Address of our SAVIOUR is a practical Illustration of that happy union in the Christian Character of the wisdom of the serpent with the harmlessness of the dove.

St. Luke's narrative is thus: *And it came to pass, that on one of those days, as JESUS Taught the People in the Temple and Preached The Gospel, the Chief Priests and the Scribes came upon Him with the Elders, and spake unto Him, saying, "Tell us by what Authority doest thou these things? or, Who is He, that gave thee this Authority?" And He Answered, and Said unto them, "I will also Ask you one thing, and answer Me! The baptism of John, Was it from Heaven? or of Men?" And they reasoned with themselves, saying, "If we shall say From Heaven! he will say, 'Why then believed ye him not?' But and if we say, Of Men! All the People will stone us; for they be persuaded that John was a Prophet:" and they answered, "That they could not tell whence it was." And JESUS Said unto them, "Neither tell I you by What Authority I Do These Things!"—Luke xx, 1 to 8.*

As their stubborn and rebellious Forefathers questioned the Authority, by which Moses acted in his opening attempts to effect, instrumentally, the deliverance of his Countrymen from Egyptian bondage, saying, "*Who made thee a Prince and a Judge over us?*"—Exod. ii, 14 [See also Acts vii, 27.], so, though A Greater than Moses was here, and, both from the Miracles Wrought, and the Wisdom and Goodness Associated with All That was Taught, an internal evidence flashed on the minds of the Unprejudiced that the Authority, under Which JESUS Acted, could not but be of DIVINE Origin, the still more stubborn and rebellious Descendants of those factious Disputants with The DIVINELY Appointed Law-Giver, in the pride and obduracy of their hearts, dared to call It in question. The same fatal system of infatuated hostility to their own Eternal welfare, in preferring the corruptible crown of Worldly Superiority, to the Crown of Glory, Which fadeth not away, but is Eternal in the Heavens, led them to reject, as evidence of DIVINE Appointment, the goodly works and words of the Disciples and Followers of CHRIST; for on Peter and John, the Apostles, having cured the impotent Man, through faith in the Name and Power of JESUS, the High Priest, his Kindred, and Others questioned the Disciples, *By what power, or by what name they had done it, counselling among themselves what they should do unto them, admitting that a notable Miracle had been done, which they could not deny, as it was manifest to them that dwelt in Jerusalem; and to prevent, as they hoped, its spreading further among the People, they commanded the Disciples, with threats, that they should speak no more in That Name. But Peter and John answered, and said unto them, "Whether it be right in the Sight of GOD to hearken unto you, more than unto GOD, judge ye! for we cannot but speak the Things Which we have seen and heard."*—Acts iv, 6, 7. 15. 21.

Thus are often the Unlearned in the depths of Human science, but taught in

the Word of GOD, and treasuring Its Truths in singleness and simplicity of heart, admitted within the Pale of Salvation, when the Gate is closed against the Spiritually Proud and the Wise in their own conceit.

On the Popular opinion entertained of John the Baptist, as a Prophet, see the observations at Chapter xiv, 5.

The hypocrisy here exhibited before The SEARCHER of all hearts, is but too generally practised even at this day, notwithstanding the Ear of The ALMIGHTY is not Averted that He cannot Hear, nor His Arm Shortened that He cannot Punish. The folly, as well as wickedness, of thus attempting to lie unto GOD, must be obvious to every One on a moment's serious reflection: and yet, what is the act of attempting to quiet our consciences, when we are disobeying their admonitions, but wilfully furthering the deceivableness of our sin, and the devices of Satan? for it is contrary to The DIVINE NATURE to be otherwise than Omniscient; and to aim at any evasion of His Penetration is as weak as it is fruitless. But, alas! how rarely do we shape our actions, or regulate our Lives and conversation, as though we lived and moved under the Ever-Watchful Eye of Him, from Whom we have our Being! To belie ourselves to GOD is, in effect, to deny Him; and them will GOD Deny in Heaven, who denied Him on Earth.

△ "But what think ye? A certain Man had two Sons; and he came to the First and said, 'Son, go work to-day in my vineyard.' He answered, and said, 'I will not!' but afterward he repented, and went. And he came to the Second, and said likewise: and he answered, and said, 'I go, Sir:' and went not. Whether of them twain did the will of his Father?" They say unto Him, "The First." JESUS Saith unto them, "Verily I Say unto you, That the Publicans and the Harlots go into The KINGDOM of GOD before you! For John came unto you in the way of Righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the Publicans and the Harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him."—28 to 32.

The mode of communicating instruction by Parables, Adopted, as it very extensively was, by our Blessed SAVIOUR, and illustrating, as it powerfully does, the object of a Preacher, is peculiarly calculated to impress the doctrine lastingly on the memory and the heart. The Scribes and Pharisees, amidst their loud and oft-asserted professions of true religion, and their claiming the guidance of the People in matters of Faith, were, in fact, themselves destitute of that inward purity and holiness, without which the profession of Religion is vain; for without those qualities, we are told, that not One shall see The LORD in the Brightness of His Glory, to experience His Mercy and His Love. Theirs was mere lip-service; and even in their prayers and proffered worship they sought more the admiration of Men than the praise and Glory of The MOST HIGH: or they strove to overawe their Fellow-Creatures into a submissiveness to their rule and governance, that the gratification of earthly ambition in power and influence, if not in sensual indulgence, might be their own. These are they, who, professing themselves to be wise, and being so in their own esteem, become Fools in a Spiritual sense, and who, weighed in the Balance of DIVINE Justice, are found miserably wanting. On the contrary, the Publicans and Sinners, being Strangers to the blinding influence of Spiritual pride, and discarding the cloak of hypocrisy, erring, in some degree, from thoughtlessness, and misled by ignorance and evil example, being as sheep without a Shepherd, left to the uncontrolled pursuit of their own sensual inclinations, when The Great SHEPHERD of Israel Called to them with a Voice of Kindness and of Truth, Inviting them to come into His Fold, to partake of His Pastures and to drink of the Water of Life freely, obeyed the Call with gladness, and continued faithful to the Call unto the end; hailing the Graciously Offered Mediation of The SON with

THE FATHER, to Effectuate their Pardon and Reconciliation, by His Own obedience unto Holiness, to Atonement for their wanderings and Self-willedness. The conduct of the two Sons, that of Each so opposite to profession, was a lively exemplification of The SAVIOUR'S Reasoning: the Publicans and Harlots, by their open avowal, or the undisguised practice of their delinquency from the path of Righteousness and true Holiness, in effect, to mere Human calculation, might seem to shut out all hope of any impression being produced on them favourable to such an amendment, as would render them acceptable Disciples of their Immaculate LORD and MASTER: whereas the outward sanctity of the chief Priests and Scribes would, to superficial Observers, convey the idea that they would not only be obedient to the Call to higher Holiness and true Happiness, but that they would continue therein, and manifest both zeal and gratitude for the welcomed change.

Though to refuse obedience in word, and afterwards, repenting of the fault, to enter upon the duty, is the Dealing towards our Heavenly FATHER, Whom we have experienced from too many of His Sons of Earth, and though, in His Forgiveness and Mercy, He is Ready to Receive even this broken measure of our obligations to Him, if offered in the spirit of faith in His Beloved and All-beneficent SON'S Interceding Merits, as the ground of their Acceptance; yet we should remember, with the wise Son of Sirach, that *if a Servant* (and are we not all Servants to our Heavenly LORD and MASTER?) *say to his Master, "I will not do, as it pleaseth thee;" though afterwards he do it, he angereth him, that punisheth him.*—Ecclesi. xix, 21. Thus we are not to do sin, that Grace may be bound: for who can tell, whether the Long-Suffering of The LORD may not, at the next instant, be Succeeded by an Infliction of His Just Vengeance and so-long Tried Forbearance; and the Soul be at once cut off, or steeped still more in the depths of disobedience and iniquity. As it is unwise in a Servant to excite the displeasure of an Earthly Master, who, though he may punish the offender, and, in uncivilized States, even to the destruction of the body, *and after that hath no more that he can do*, surely in an infinitely greater degree should the Servants of The MOST HIGH GOD avoid offending Him, Who can not only inflict Punishment to the body, by sickness, accident, or otherwise, but can destroy both body and Soul in Hell. Therefore, although the highest consolation and encouragement are thus held out to the contrite and penitent heart, however deep the dye of its past transgressions, yet is there no sanction afforded to a presumptuous perseverance either in doing evil, or neglecting to do good.

How ready are we to point out the mote in our Neighbour's eye, though heedless of the beam that obscures the Spiritual vision of our own. This greater readiness of the Publicans than of the Pharisees to a belief in JESUS, was, on various occasions, actually evinced, and particularly after the interview between CHRIST and the Disciples of John the Baptist, and from the Impressive discourse then Delivered by JESUS; for in the Gospel according to St. Luke, it is stated, that *All the People that heard him, and the Publicans, justified GOD, being baptized with the baptism of John: but the Pharisees and Lawyers rejected the Counsel of GOD against themselves, being not baptized of him.*—chap. vii, 29, 30. Of all the evils, therefore, against which it is most vitally important for our Everlasting Interest to guard our hearts, by watching and inward prayer, Spiritual pride, which produces, unfailingly, the impoisoning fruits of unbelief and hypocrisy in our religious Calling, is the greatest. How falling to these Self-opinionated Priests, these Esteemers of themselves as the only Righteous, must have been a comparison of their state with that of Others, whom they had spurned and deemed as Outcasts from the Commonwealth of Israel; and still more so when that comparison terminated so triumphantly for



the Objects of their reviling and persecution, and so awfully confounding as to the Eternal Destinies of themselves. For to go into The KINGDOM of GOD, Faith in JESUS, in His Incarnation and Effectual Intercession, Who Keepeth the Door, and is the Watchman of That Spiritual Israel, and Who never Slumbereth nor Sleepeth, is essentially necessary; and they, who have it not, must remain without, amongst those fierce and unclean Ones, who are hostile alike to their own peace, as to the Spiritual prosperity of Others.

See the observations on Chapter vi, 33, 34, in reference to The KINGDOM of HEAVEN.


△ The purity of the Baptist's life was such as to draw respect from All, who witnessed it; and was greatly instrumental in giving efficacy to his doctrines, except amongst the haughty and supercilious Pharisees; for JESUS, The SON of GOD, The ORACLE of Truth, Declared of John, that a Greater than he had not arisen amongst them. Repentance was the Primary doctrine which he practiced, and Righteousness he enforced by example as well as precept. Thus did he bring many a wandering Sinner home from the pit of destruction to the pale of Salvation. And though Others, to whom it was Offered, needed it not less, yet, as they disdained it, and would have none of it, they thereby lost, without hope of recovery, the Portion of Inheritance in the Land of Spiritual Promise. Nor, as it seems, did the effects of conversion in Others, by their manifesting the substitution of purity for profligacy, piety for blasphemy, order and sobriety for violence and intemperance, and self-government for licentiousness, operate to change the stony hearts of these Votaries of Spiritual pride; though before their eyes the once Slaves of sin and Captives of Satan were thus set at liberty, displaying their joy in The LORD and in the Strength of His Salvation: yet did the infatuated Scribes and Pharisees refuse to share in their joy, and to seek the Same Means of Salvation.

See the observations at Chapter iii, 1, 2.

In another passage St. Luke records, that *There came Publicans to be baptized* (of John,) *and said unto him, "Master, what shall we do?" And he said unto them, "Exact no more than that which is appointed you!"*—Chap. iii, 12, 13.

Thus from the Text and from the foregoing reference, it is observable that the Publicans evinced early a teachable spirit, and a desire to be led from the error of their ways unto the Truth, exhibiting a faith that was associated equally with repentance and reformation: and to their faith, which they acquired by earnestly seeking for it, they sought also to have added Spiritual Knowledge, that they might cherish the Christian Graces in the love of them. But, on the contrary, the Scribes and the Pharisees, who had ever the Law and the Prophecies in their hands, and The DIVINE Word in their mouth, neglected the just Interpretation and Application of Them to the nurture of their heart; and, in their dedication of themselves to Worldly distinction, amidst their lust for power, they disdained a system of Religion, whose primary Principle was Self-abasement and Self-condemnation. These have now long since been dead, having been cut off in their iniquity, and sent to their awful account; and well would it have been for succeeding Generations, if the folly the former were thus guilty of, in neglecting so Great Salvation, had stood an isolated instance of Human weakness and depravity: but even now, Scribes and Pharisees in spirit, with hearts as obdurate and impenetrable, abound; and Publicans and Harlots are sooner won over than they. The Sceptic and the Infidel, in all the pride and arrogance of Self-sufficiency, set up their judgment, not only against the consecrated opinions of Ages, but also against the Revealed Word and Will of GOD, Who Made them, and by Whose Judgment on their Everlasting Destiny they must either stand or fall. With every thing either within or around him, that

should satisfy him of his own insufficiency and of the Higher Power of The CREATOR of the Universe, he, whose Life is suspended by a thread which in any instant may break, and which must ultimately give way; he, who cannot redeem his own Soul nor save his life from destruction, in the vanity of Self-approving disposition, sets equally at nought the Mercies and the Vengeance of An Almighty GOD! Others there are too, who, not denying outwardly The GOD That Made them, have only faith without any correspondence in conduct, and, therefore, dead as being without the fruits of repentance unto Holiness: for faith without works, and such works as both the Precepts and Example of CHRIST Inculcate, is as an unprofitable Servant, and shall be cast out into utter darkness, and to whom JESUS, The JUDGE of All will Say, "*Depart from Me, for I never Knew you!*" Again, a third description of Individuals there is, who, without openly denying CHRIST, labour not in His Service, but, resting on their own righteousness, and counting much on their general observance of the moral duties, reject or think lightly of the humiliating and Self-condemning principles of the Christian Code, deeming themselves, through GOD'S Mercy, not unfit for the Society of the Saints in Light, and capable of enduring the vision of Those Glories, That Surround The MAJESTY of HEAVEN, and entitled to participate in those Joys, That Emanate from The DIVINE NATURE in the fulness of Their Purity and Perfection throughout the inconceivable expanse of Eternity. How unchildlike such arrogance! how infatuated such folly! how big with the apprehension of unutterable and unalterable ruin! since it seems to exclude any justifiable hope of pardon and propitiation, because it acknowledges not the indispensable necessity of Such A SAVIOUR; and attributes not the Accomplishment of Man's Redemption to The SON of GOD through His Incarnation and Sufferings and Death; and leaves Man to the dreadful condition of standing or falling in all Eternity by the Immaculate and Immutable Sentence of DIVINE Justice. And when GOD is Extreme only in His Justice to Mark what is done amiss, who shall be able to stand? Were Futurity to have a bound, and the duration of the life and condition of each Individual in that state, to depend on the proportion of evil or of good that Man, left altogether to himself, unaided by the Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT, had done in this life, and if no DIVINE Revelation of the duties Required of Man by GOD had been Delivered, this Self-reliance might have seemed natural. But since the Prize of our High Calling of GOD, in CHRIST JESUS, is to the most exalted elevation, to which Created Beings can attain, of pure and perfect Felicity in the knowledge of GOD and in the contemplation of the Love of His SON, and that without the remotest limit, how can Man justify to himself the hope or expectation of being advanced to such a State of inconceivable Glory and Blessedness, otherwise than by gratitude for the Sacrifice, and faith in the Merits and Mediation, of The SON of GOD.

St. Luke introduces a Parable by our SAVIOUR, Which has some affinity.  to the Text, thus: *JESUS Said, "A certain Man had two Sons: and the younger of them said to his Father, 'Father, give me the portion of goods, that falleth to me!' And he divided unto them his living. And not many days after, the younger Son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far Country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living: and when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that Land; and he began to be in want; and he went and joined himself to a Citizen of that Country: and he sent him into his fields to feed swine; and he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no Man gave unto him. And when he came to himself, he said, 'How many hired Servants of my Father's have bread enough and to spare; and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my Father, and will say unto him, 'Father, I have*

singed against HEAVEN, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy ~~Son~~! Make me as One of thy hired Servants!' And he arose and came to his Father: but when he was yet a great way off, his Father saw him, and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the Son said unto him, 'Father, I have sinned against HEAVEN, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy Son!' But the Father said to his Servants, 'Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him: and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat and be merry! for this, my Son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found!' And they began to be merry. Now his elder Son was in the field; and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing: and he called One of the Servants, and asked 'What these things meant?' and he said unto him, 'Thy Brother is come; and thy Father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound.' And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his Father out, and entreated him: and he, answering, said to his Father, 'Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment; and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my Friends; but as soon as this, thy Son was come, which hath devoured thy living with Harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf.' And he said unto him, 'Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine: it was meet that we should make merry, and be glad; for this, thy Brother, was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.'" Chap. xv, 11 to 32.

Here are illustrated the fruits of a true repentance, and of deep Self-abasement. Notwithstanding the encouragement, in the first instance, manifested of Fatherly affection in the cherishing reception of the Son, the Latter disclaimed his right to be regarded as a Son, admitting his rebellion equally against his HEAVENLY FATHER as against his Earthly One. But as a Father hath compassion on the Child of his loins, so hath our Heavenly FATHER Mercy upon them, who turn unto Him with penitent and believing hearts; and we are assured that *there is joy amongst the Angels in Heaven over one Sinner, that repenteth*. On the selfishness of the Brother, who, wrapt in the feeling of his own righteousness, could not only not share in the joy of his Brother's restoration from the worst of deaths, a death in sin, to a life of righteousness and true Holiness, but was envious of a Father's joy thereat, it may be remarked and offered as a recommendation to our own bosoms, that we should cautiously guard them from feeling either jealousy or contempt or dissatisfaction, if a higher measure of DIVINE Grace be Imparted to a Soul, once sunk in the lowest depths of iniquity, but become, by That Grace, a new Creature, than to ourselves, who may not so deeply have outraged The DIVINE Law. On the efficacy of repentance and prayer, when learnt, as they frequently are, in the school of affliction, we have one striking proof, amongst many others, in the Old Testament, that of Manasseh, the Son of the good Hezekiah, who, forfeiting by his idolatry the Protection of JEHOVAH, was conquered by the Assyrian Monarch and carried Captive to Babylon: *but when in this affliction he besought The LORD, his GOD, and humbled himself greatly before The GOD of his Father, and prayed unto Him; and He was Intreated of him, and Heard his supplication, and Brought him again to Jerusalem into his Kingdom.*—2 Chron. xxxiii, 10 to 13. When we return to our Heavenly FATHER with shame and with sorrow of heart for our unmindfulness of Him, Who, in His Dispensations both of Providence and Grace, has been ever Mindful of us, He then, for the Sake of The SON of His Love and His Intercession for us, *will Wash and Purify us, and Sanctify and Justify us, and Take us into His Adoption and Favour.* [1 Cor. vi, 11.] And Such of us, who, in times past, walked according to the course of this World,

*according to the Spirit that worketh in the Children of disobedience, being by Nature the Children of wrath, and dead in trespasses and sins, hath GOD Quickened, being Rich in mercy, for His Great Love wherewith He Loved us for CHRIST'S Sake.—Eph. ii, 1 to 6.*

“Hear another Parable! There was a certain Householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about and digged a wine-press in it, and built a tower, and let it out to Husbandmen, and went into a far Country: and when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his Servants to the Husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. And the Husbandmen took his Servants, and beat One, and killed Another, and stoned Another! Again he sent other Servants more than the first; and they did unto them likewise! But last of all he sent his Son, saying, ‘They will reverence my Son!’ But when the Husbandmen saw the Son, they said among themselves, ‘This is the Heir! come, let us kill him; and let us sieze on his Inheritance!’ And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him! When the Lord, therefore, of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those Husbandmen?” They say unto Him, “He will miserably destroy those wicked Men; and will let out his vineyard unto other Husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons.” 33 to 41.

Instead of at once Immolating or Casting out these rebellious Tenants from His Domain, The ALMIGHTY, in the Plentitude of His Forbearance and Compassion, Sent His Warning Admonitions successively by his Prophets, and, finally, in the PERSON of His Beloved SON, Who Left the Bosom of His FATHER and The Communion of The HOLY SPIRIT, Resigning, for a time, a Participation in the Celestial Glories, and Taking upon Him the form of Man; and, after Enduring unparalleled Persecutions in Body and inconceivable Agonies in Spirit, from the pollutions of a sinful World being heaped upon Him, Yielded Himself a Willing Victim in Atonement for Man's transgression, and to Bring in upon our Nature Perfect Righteousness; Thereby to Effectuate for us the Pardon and Reconciliation of The TRIUNE GODHEAD. Yet still doth Man, in the scarcely conceivable reach of his vanity and presumption, discard These Gracious Means of Happiness in perpetuity, and crucify The SON of GOD afresh; neglecting the culture of the holy seed and soil entrusted to his keeping; and even disputing, and that openly and unblushingly, the obligation to pay homage to his CREATOR, REDEEMER, and SANCTIFIER. Should we, however, persist in such unnatural, because necessarily Self-destroying, rebellion, the Time will come, and cannot be far distant with the Youngest amongst us, when, if we repent not, and work not, honestly as in the day, Vengeance in Retributive Justice will Overtake us; and, when too late, we shall rue, in the unutterable agony of never-ending despair, the unjust, unhallowed, and unthankful tenor of our conduct, whilst the Light of Grace was Shining for us; and the Door of Mercy Held open to us.

The introduction of a Vineyard, as a figurative elucidation of DIVINE Truth, is frequent throughout the Scriptural Compilations. In one of the most and many beautiful of holy David's compositions, it is thus used: *O GOD of Hosts, Thou hast Brought a Vine out of Egypt, Thou hast Cast out the Heathen and Planted it: Thou Preparedst room before it, and didst Cause it to take deep root; and it filled the Land: the Hills were covered with the shadow of it; and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedars: she sent out her boughs unto the Sea, and her branches unto the River! Why hast Thou then Broken down her hedges, so that all they, which pass by the way, do pluck her? the boar, out of the wood, doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it! Return, we beseech Thee, O GOD of Hosts; Look down from Heaven, and Behold and Visit this Vine, and the Vineyard, which Thy Right Hand hath Planted; and the Branch,*

*that Thou Madest strong for Thyself! It is burned with fire; it is cut down: they perish at the Rebuke of Thy Countenance!—Ps. lxxx, 7 to 16.*

The Effects of GOD'S Bounty, and the Consequences of His Favour being Withdrawn, are thus similarly pictured, though the cause of such an awful Change in The DIVINE Dispensations are fully disclosed in the one case, and not in the other; still the inference is palpable.

The Prophet Isaiah, under the Inspiration of The HOLY SPIRIT, had, under a somewhat similar figure, denounced the unrighteousness and the violence of the Jews: *Now (said he) will I sing to my Well-Beloved a Song of my Beloved, touching His Vineyard! My Well-Beloved hath a Vineyard in a very fruitful Hill; and He Fenced it, and Gathered out the stones thereof, and Planted it with the Choicest Vine, and Built a Tower in the midst of it, and also Made a wine-press therein: And He Looked that it should bring forth grapes: and it brought forth wild grapes.* And then, in the Utterance of JEHOVAH Himself, "*And now, O Inhabitants of Jerusalem and Men of Judah, judge, I Pray you, between Me and My Vineyard! What could have been done more to My Vineyard, that I have not Done in it? Wherefore, when I Looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes? And now, go to; I will Tell you What I will Do to My Vineyard: I will Take away the hedge thereof; and it shall be eaten up; and Break down the wall thereof; and it shall be trodden down; and I will Lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come up briers and thorns; I will also Command the Clouds that they rain no rain upon it!*" For (then this Prophet resumed,) *the Vineyard of The LORD of Hosts is the House of Israel; and the Men of Judah His pleasant Plant: and He Looked for judgment: but behold oppression! for righteousness; but behold a cry!*—Isa. v, 1 to 7.

The same metaphor is used by the Prophet Jeremiah, where he is The Voice of The LORD, Expostulating with the same People of His Choice! saying, "*I had Planted thee a noble Vine; wholly a right seed! How then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange Vine unto Me?*"—Chap. ii, 21.

△ St. Mark's narrative of the Parable is thus: *And JESUS Began to Speak by Parables. "A certain Man planted a vineyard, and set an hedge about it, and digged a place for the wine-fat, and built a tower; and let it out to Husbandmen, and went into a far Country: and, at the season, he sent to the Husbandmen a Servant, that he might receive from the Husbandmen of the fruit of the vineyard. And they caught him, and beat him, and sent him away empty! And again he sent unto them another Servant; and at him they cast stones, and wounded him in the head, and sent him away shamefully handled! And again he sent Another, and him they killed; and many Others; beating Some, and killing Some! Having, therefore, yet one Son, his well-beloved, he sent him also last unto them, saying, 'They will reverence my Son!' But those Husbandmen said among themselves, 'This is the Heir; come, let us kill him; and the Inheritance shall be ours:' and they took him, and killed him, and cast him out of the vineyard. What shall, therefore, the Lord of the vineyard do? He will come, and destroy the Husbandmen; and will give the vineyard unto Others."*—Chap. xii, 1 to 9.

The only observable difference here, is in the Person giving the answer to the question; St. Matthew expressly making it the answer of those, to whom the Question was put, thereby Judging them out of their own mouth, (whence, probably, final Judgment will also proceed, when we shall see all things as they really are, laying aside the veil of flesh, and shall know how to choose the good and refuse the evil): but St. Mark, leaving it doubtful at least, whether the answer were not Pronounced by JESUS Himself; though by their silence His Hearers virtually assented to it: indeed it is indicative of a Course of Proceeding, Such as That of An Omniscient and Righteous as well as Almighty GOD,

which no rightly thinking Person can gainsay: a conduct, which Human feelings dictate. But This LORD of the Universe, Who is Imaged by this Lord of the Vineyard, as The FATHER of His Chosen People Israel, the Husbandmen, Sent His Only SON, not to Exact tribute, but to Give the Vineyard to the Husbandmen; and, moreover, to Add thereunto an Everlasting inheritance in the Vineyard of the Spiritual Jerusalem. And, notwithstanding, their rejection of an Offer, so Gracious and transcendently Benevolent, and their crucifixion of The MESSENGER of Such Tidings of Good Will; yet, in the Order of His Forbearance and Compassion, JEHOVAH did not suddenly and once utterly Destroy the Husbandmen, but Held out to them, in a season for repentance, a Promise of Pardon, if they would avail themselves of It; and has reserved a Remnant amongst them, who, though dispossessed of their Earthly inheritance, may yet share the Inestimable Blessing of an Inheritance in Light and Glory Everlasting.

St. Luke's description is thus: *Then Began JESUS to Speak to the People this Parable: "A certain Man planted a vineyard, and let it forth to Husbandmen, and went into a far country for a long time: and at the season he sent a Servant to the Husbandmen, that they should give him of the fruit of the vineyard; but the Husbandmen beat him, and sent him away empty: and again he sent another Servant, and they beat him also, and intreated him shamefully, and sent him away empty: and again he sent a Third; and they wounded him also, and cast him out. Then said the Lord of the vineyard, 'What shall I do? I will send my beloved Son: may be they will reverence him when they see him!' But when the Husbandmen saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, 'This is the Heir; come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours!' So they cast him out of the vineyard and killed him. What, therefore, shall the Lord of the vineyard do unto them? He shall come and destroy these Husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to Others."* And when they heard it, they said, "*GOD Forbid!*"—Chap. xx, 9 to 16.

St. Luke thus gives a different turn to the effect produced on the Audience of the Parable; but it seems to be rather what may have been the reflection made on it by the Person who communicated the narrative to St. Luke, (for both he and St. Mark were, it is believed, not present on the occasion,) a conclusion to which the Evangelist's mind assented,—a conclusion which is connected with what immediately follows in all the narratives, the Allusion by our SAVIOUR to Himself, as Prophetically demonstrated by David in the xviii Psalm, 22, as the Corner Stone rejected by the Builders; for St. Luke, differently from the other Evangelists, goes on (after the before quoted words, *GOD Forbid!*) thus: *And JESUS Beheld them, and Said, "What is This then, That is Written, 'The Stone, Which the Builders rejected, the Same is become the Head of the Corner:' (and St. Luke alone adds,) 'Whosoever shall fall upon That Stone shall be broken! but on Whomsoever It shall fall, It will grind him to powder.'"*—17, 18. But St. Matthew, as we shall afterwards see, when referring to this Prophecy of David, adds, as our SAVIOUR'S enunciation: *"Therefore Say I unto you, The KINGDOM of GOD shall be taken from you, and Given to a Nation, bringing forth the fruits thereof."*—43.

If the observation, noticed in St. Mark, were at all Made by the People, it is probable that it might have been made after this Threat of our SAVIOUR to transfer the KINGDOM of GOD from them to Others. But the variation is unimportant as to the main point, namely, the Allegorical Prophecy by JESUS, at the Jews, though the Elect People of GOD, would kill The SON of GOD, though Coming with the Offer of Salvation: and that, therefore, the Nation would lose, and, by their own confession, deservedly so, the Peculiar Countenance and protection of their Heavenly KING. To us Christians, who have a Richer Vine-

yard freely Given to us, in which is The Righteous BRANCH That Beareth, in beauteous clusters, the Fruits that flourish in the Paradise of JEHOVAH, the Lesson forcibly Instructs us in the necessity of rendering the tribute of thankfulness and reverence to The Bountiful DISPENSER of all Good for the Especial Blessing Communicated to us, of having The Only Begotten SON of GOD Graciously Offering Himself for the Atonement of our past undutifulness and ingratitude; and Effecting for us, on repentance and regeneration, Reconciliation and Acceptance with GOD, The FATHER, by the Renewal of His Covenant of Mercy towards us, Sealed with the Blood of His SON, the True Paschal and Propitiatory LAMB of Sacrifice. The Effect of The DIVINE Visitation of temporal Chastisement on the Jews, in faithful observance of This our SAVIOUR'S Prophecy, we are ready to acknowledge. On our Nation, or on Ourselves individually, we may fearfully expect a similar Condemnation and Punishment, if, in like manner, we are found to be offending. May we, therefore, reverence The SON as we reverence The FATHER! remembering that if we crucify The SON of GOD afresh, after having the knowledge of Salvation, through Him, and Him Alone, Revealed to us, and outwardly professing to believe in Him, we become Outcasts from The KINGDOM of HEAVEN, having no justifiable hope of the Inheritance that awaits the Stewards of the Household of Faith.

The Servant alluded to, and in our SAVIOUR'S Contemplation, as One of the Messengers and Prophets of The LORD, and destroyed by stoning, was, probably, Zechariah, who, it appears, suffered martyrdom by that dreadful Engine, in the hand of those, who should have hailed and cherished him as the Servant of The MOST HIGH: as is related in the 2nd Chronicles xxiv, 20, 21: *And The SPIRIT of GOD Came upon Zechariah, the Son of Jehoiada the Priest, which stood above the People, and said unto them, "Thus Saith GOD, 'Why transgress ye the Commandments of The LORD, that ye cannot prosper? Because ye have forsaken The LORD, He hath also Forsaken you.'"* And they conspired against him, and stoned him with stones, at the commandment of the King, in the Court of the House of The LORD. And in the same Book, the persecutions of Other of The LORD'S Appointed Instruments of His Merciful and Admonitory Revelations, are thus Recorded: *But they mocked the Messengers of GOD and despised His Words and misused His Prophets, until the Wrath of The LORD Arose against His People.*—2 Chron. xxxvi, 16. The same rebellious and violent spirit prevailed in the days of Nehemiah, more than a century and a half afterwards; for when communing with JEHOVAH, he makes this confession: *They (the People of Israel) were disobedient and rebellious against Thee, (O LORD,) and cast Thy Law behind their backs, and slew Thy Prophets, which testified against them to turn them to Thee; and they wrought great provocations.*—Neh. ix, 26.

See observations on St. Matthew v, 12.

The truly heroic and Christian Martyr St. Stephen was, in himself, an instance of the truth of the testimony he bore to the persecuting spirit of the Jews against Such as The LORD, in His Mercy, Appointed to be Shepherds of His Spiritual Flock in Israel: for, in addressing them and remonstrating with them for their incredulity, he said to them, *Ye Stiff-necked and Uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist The HOLY GHOST! As your Fathers did; so do ye! Which of the Prophets have not your Fathers persecuted? And they have slain them, which shewed before of the Coming of The JUST ONE; of Whom ye have been now the Betrayers and Murderers! Who have received the Law by the disposition of Angels; and have not kept It!*—Acts vii, 51, &c.

St. Paul also, in offering Consolation to Some of the Gentile Converts

under their suffering from their infidel Brethren, by comparing it with that experienced from the Proud and Malignant, by Those who were Israelites indeed, said, *They both killed The LORD JESUS, and their own Prophets, and have persecuted us.*—1 Thess. ii, 15. In the Epistle specially addressed to the Hebrews, after enumerating a long catalogue of Men eminent for faith, and alluding generally to the Prophets, the Author says of them, that *Some were tortured, not accepting Deliverance, that they might obtain a better Resurrection: and Others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings; yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment; they were stoned; they were sawn asunder; were tempted; were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (of Whom the World was not worthy;) they wandered in Deserts and in Mountains, and in dens and caves of the Earth.*—Heb. xi, 32, 35 to 38.

That JESUS, as The SON of GOD, though Veiled in Human Nature for Man's Redemption, was The Heir of all Things in Earth as well as Heaven, had been Prophetically proclaimed by His Progenitor in the Flesh, the Royal Psalmist of Israel, when he declared, as the Decree Which Issued from On HIGH, in the Language of JEHOVAH: "*THOU art My SON; this Day have I Begotten Thee; Ask of Me; and I shall Give Thee the Heavens for Thine Inheritance, and the uttermost Parts of the Earth for Thy Possession.*"—Ps. ii, 7, 8. But as GOD is A SPIRIT, so is this Inheritance Promised to His SON Spiritual, being the Possession of the hearts of All who have faith to be Saved through That SON'S Mediation, thus figuratively represented by a Territorial Inheritance. And how grateful should we be to have it thus within our power to become the Property of so Gracious and Merciful A MASTER, Who so Loved the World, as to Give Himself for it. The Same Character of our Blessed SAVIOUR forms the introductory passage of the Inspired Epistle to the Hebrews, thus: *GOD, Who at sundry times and in divers Manners Spake in time past unto the Fathers by the Prophets, hath in these last days Spoken unto us by His SON, Whom He hath Appointed Heir of All Things: by Whom also He Made the Worlds; Who, being the Brightness of His Glory, and the Express Image of His PERSON, and Upholding All Things by the Word of His Power, when He had by Himself Purged our sins, Sat down on the Right Hand of The MAJESTY On HIGH; being Made so much Better than the Angels, as He hath by Inheritance Obtained a more Excellent Name than they.*—Heb. i, 1 to 4.

In the Same Psalm, the daring outrage against the blasphemous rejection of The LORD of Heaven and Earth, in the PERSON of His Beloved SON, was thus prefigured by the holy David: *The Kings of the Earth set themselves, and the Rulers take counsel together, against The LORD, and against His ANOINTED.*—Ps. ii, 2. But though in the Flesh they destroyed, for a time, His Body, He being Willingly, for our sakes, Obedient unto Death, yet had they no more that they could do; for The SPIRIT of The SIRE still Lived in The SPIRIT of The SON, and That was Triumphant over Death and Hell, over Principalities and Powers; and all Nations and People and Tongues shall finally acknowledge Him as The MESSIAH. The application of this very Passage in the Psalms to our SAVIOUR was made by St. Peter and St. John, when addressing The ALMIGHTY, after they had boldly proclaimed The DIVINITY of CHRIST before their hostile Accusers, they said, *Of a truth against Thy HOLY CHILD JESUS, Whom Thou hast Anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the People of Israel, were gathered together.*—Acts iv, 24, 26, 27.

The Israelites, being thus deservedly Visited with Desolation, as a Nation, for their apostacy, we Gentiles, to whom the Greater Mercies of The LORD have been Extended in the Purer Light of the Gospel, and in the Offer of



Redemption and Advancement to Glory Everlasting, through the Mediation of The SON of GOD, may reasonably ask ourselves in the admonitory language of Inspiration, *How shall we escape if we neglect so Great Salvation?*—Heb. ii, 3.

The other Husbandmen, who, as more faithful to their MASTER'S Service, were to succeed the outcast Israelites, were the Gentile Converts to Christianity, as declared by Paul and Barnabas in their expostulation with the incredulous Jews, in the following words: *It was necessary that the Word of GOD should first have been spoken to you; but seeing ye put It from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of Everlasting Life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles:* [Acts xiii, 46.] and again, when the Jews opposed themselves to Paul (testifying that JESUS was The CHRIST): *and when they blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, "Your blood be upon your own heads! I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles."*—Acts xviii, 5, 6.

The destruction of Jerusalem, under the Babylonish captivity, notwithstanding its awfully memorable results in the history of the Jews, had lost its influence as a salutary Lesson to their Successors. Still did this stiff-necked People reject the Messengers of The MOST HIGH, and even discard The SON of GOD, The long Promised MESSIAH. [See 2 Chron. xxxvi, 14, &c.]

△ JESUS saith unto them, "Did ye never read in the Scriptures, 'The Stone, Which the Builders rejected, the Same is Become the Head of the Corner?' This is The LORD'S Doing; and it is Marvellous in our eyes. Therefore Say I unto you, The KINGDOM of GOD shall be Taken from you, and Given to a Nation bringing forth the fruits Thereof. And Whosoever shall fall on This Stone shall be broken; but on Whomsoever It shall fall, It will Grind him to powder." And when the Chief Priests and Pharisees had heard His Parables, they perceived that He Spoke of them. But when they sought to lay hands on Him, they feared the Multitude, because they took Him for a Prophet.—42 to 46.

From the view of the Israelites, as Cast out from the possession of a fruitful Vineyard, which they had forfeited by their disobedience and rebellion, our SAVIOUR Characterizes them, in the Prophetical language of David, as Builders wantonly and foolishly rejecting the Stone calculated at once to be the Ornament and Support of their Temple: but notwithstanding such impious rejection, the Same Stone was Selected by The Great MASTER BUILDER of the Universe to be the Chief Stone of That Spiritual Temple, Where all the Saints, both in Heaven and Earth, hold Communion. Thus doth the Wisdom of The ALMIGHTY Bring to nought the devices of wicked and vain Men; and in spite of all their varied efforts to oppose Him, (though at the risk of their everlasting destruction,) doth He Establish, in His Appointed Season, the Works He Ordained from the beginning of the World to be Executed, and which He hath, from time to time, moreover Vouchsafed to Promise the Performance of, by the Revelation of His Infallible Purposes through His Servants, the Prophets. Marvellous and transcendantly Exulting to His faithful Followers as was This Assurance of the final Exaltation of JESUS, yet how much more Wondrous to their contemplation must have been His Love, in Willingly Descending from the Mansions of Highest Glory and the most Perfect and Purest Bliss, to Take upon Himself the form of Man, and Submit to persecution and death, that He might Open the Gate of Heaven to All Believers. Surprising as may seem the conduct of the Jews in thus repudiating So Gracious A MEDIATOR, yet in our judgment upon them and their folly and impiety, we should bear in mind that we also have but too often set His Counsels at nought, or have shielded ourselves in our self-righteousness against the fear of death and of Judgment. Introductory to that Prophetic Passage of the holy David, Quoted by our SAVIOUR, the Psalmist thus breaks forth into prayer: *Open to me the Gates of Righteous-*

ness; *I will go into them; and I will praise The LORD: this Gate of The LORD, into which the Righteous shall enter:* (he then adds,) *I will praise Thee, O LORD; for Thou hast Heard me, and art Become My Salvation.*—Ps. cxviii, 19, 20. The Advancement of JESUS, amidst the manifold rejection of Him, as The Triumphant SAVIOUR of the true Israelites, was, under the same Figure, thus foretold by the Prophet Isaiah: *Thus Saith The LORD GOD: "Behold, I Lay in Zion for a Foundation a Stone, a Tried Stone, a Precious Corner Stone, a Sure Foundation!"*—Chap. xxviii, 16.

St. Mark's account is as follows: *And have ye not read This Scripture: "The Stone, Which the Builders rejected, is Become the Head of the Corner?" This was The LORD'S Doing; and It is Marvellous in our eyes! And they sought to lay hold on Him, but feared the People: for they knew that He had Spoken the Parable against them: and they left Him, and went their way.*—Chap. xii, 10 to 12.

St. Luke's narrative is thus: *And JESUS Beheld them, and Said, "What is This then That is Written, 'The Stone, Which the Builders rejected, the Same is Become the Head of the Corner?' Whosoever shall fall upon That Stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever It shall fall, It will Grind him to powder."* And the Chief Priests and the Scribes the same hour sought to lay hands on Him; and they feared the People: for they perceived that He had Spoken this Parable against them.—Chap. xx, 17 to 19.

The latter Evangelist thus, it seems, omitted the 23rd verse of the cxviii Psalm. St Mark too omits the awful Prophecy of threatening that *All, who fall on the Stone should be broken; but that All, on whom It falls, should be crushed to atoms.* These variances are, however, only the natural effect of different Historians relating the same chain of events, without any preconceived plan of agreement and continual comparison between them; nor are they, indeed, material to the main point, which is the Application, by our SAVIOUR, of the Prophecy to Himself; whence it necessarily follows, that as He was to be Exalted, it must be on the downfall of His Enemies.

The same Prophecy is thus, in the most pointed manner, applied also by St. Peter to our SAVIOUR: *Ye Rulers of the People and Elders of Israel, if ye this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent Man, by what means he is made whole? Be it known unto you all, and to all the People of Israel, that by the Name of JESUS CHRIST of Nazareth, Whom ye crucified, Whom GOD Raised from the Dead, even by Him, doth this Man stand here before you whole: This is The Stone, Which was set at nought of you Builders, Which is Become The Head of the Corner: neither is there Salvation in any other; for there is none other Name under Heaven Given among Men, whereby we must be Saved.*—Act ii, 8 to 12.

For the same object, St. Paul also refers, in his Epistle to the Ephesians, ii, 19, 22, to the same Prophecy, saying unto them as Gentiles, and, therefore, contra-distinguished from Jews, *Now, therefore, ye are no more Strangers and Foreigners, but Fellow-Citizens with the Saints, and of the Household of GOD; and are Built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets; JESUS CHRIST Himself being the Chief Corner Stone: in Whom all the Building, fitly Framed together, Groweth unto an Holy Temple in The LORD: in Whom ye also are Built together for An Habitation of GOD through The SPIRIT.*

In his Epistle, St. Peter also again adverts to It, as well as to the corresponding Prophecy in Isaiah; thus addressing alike Jews and Gentiles, who were Converts to Christianity: *Wherefore laying aside all malice and all guile and hypocrisies and envies, and all evil speakings, as new born Babes desire the sincere milk of The Word! that ye may grow Thereby: if so be ye have tasted that The LORD is Gracious: to Whom coming as unto A Living Stone, disallowed, indeed, of Men, but Chosen of GOD and Precious, ye also as lively Stones, are*

*built up a Spiritual House, an holy Priesthood to offer up Spiritual sacrifices, Acceptable to GOD, by JESUS CHRIST; wherefore also it is contained in the Scripture, [Isa. xxviii, 16,] "Behold, I Lay in Sion a Chief Corner Stone, Elect, Precious; and he, that believeth on Him, shall not be confounded!" Unto you, therefore, which believe, He is Precious; but unto them, which be disobedient, The Stone, Which the Builders disallowed. The Same is Made The Head of the Corner, and A Stone of stumbling and A Rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the Word, being disobedient.—1 Peter ii, 1 to 8.*

We have thus, immediately from One of the most zealous of CHRIST'S Disciples, a full illustration, not only of the Prophecy, but of CHRIST'S Denunciation That Arose out of It. This Denunciation is, in effect, Similar to That at Chapter viii, 12, Establishing that those, who are Jews only outwardly, will be for ever excluded The KINGDOM of HEAVEN. Such, also, will as inevitably be the Doom of those, who, though outwardly professing the faith of CHRIST, have, inwardly, their hearts not right with GOD; who do not in spirit and in truth rest their hope of Salvation on the Incarnation and Intercession of The SON of GOD, and on the Sanctifying Power of The HOLY SPIRIT, as the First Fruits Thereof; but either arrogate to themselves a sufficiency of Self-righteousness to work out their own Salvation, thus falling upon The Stone, and, thereby, be themselves broken; or openly deny The LORD, Who Bought them, and thus suffering The Stone to Fall upon them, are Thence ground to powder.


The same awful Fate is denounced by the Prophet Isaiah on the Faithless and Disobedient in his day, whom he thus warned of their danger, and to whom he thus pointed out the way to escape: *Sanctify The LORD of Hosts Himself; and let Him be your Fear, and let Him be your Dread! And He shall be for A Sanctuary: but for A Stone of stumbling and for A Rock of offence to Both the Houses of Israel: for A Gin and for A Snare to the Inhabitants of Jerusalem: and Many among them shall stumble and fall and be broken and be snared and be taken.—Isa. viii, 13 to 15.*

These quotations, both from the Psalms and Isaiah, are thus further illustrated by St. Paul in his Epistle to the Romans, wherein he is urging the necessity of faith in CHRIST, as the only effectual Means of Salvation, and insisting on the utter insufficiency of Human righteousness, not founded on that Basis, and entirely built up on CHRIST; thus expressing himself: *What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the Righteousness which is of Faith. But Israel, which followed after the Law of Righteousness, hath not attained to the Law of Righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by Faith, but, as it were, by the works of the Law: for they stumbled at That Stumbling Stone, as it is Written, "Behold, I Lay in Sion a Stumbling Stone and Rock of offence! And Whosoever believeth on Him, shall not be ashamed.—Rom. ix, 30 to 33.*

Isaiah also, in another place, foretold the entire destruction of all those, on whom This Stone, The Safe-Guard of the true Israel, should Fall, that is, on those, who will not come unto CHRIST, that they may be Saved, nor manifest that love towards Him, which induceth to the keeping His Commandments. For, as the Oracle of GOD, the Prophet declared, that *the Nation and Kingdom that will not serve The LORD, shall perish; yea, that those Nations shall be utterly wasted.—Isa. lx, 12.* And to the final and universal Supremacy of The KINGDOM of CHRIST does the Prophet Daniel allude, when, in the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, he says, *The GOD of Heaven shall Set up a KINGDOM Which shall never be destroyed; and the KINGDOM shall not be left to other People; but It shall Break in pieces and Consume all these Kingdoms; and It shall Stand for ever.* (The Prophet adding,) *Forasmuch as thou, (O King Nebuchad-*

zzar,) sawest that *The Stone was Cut out of the Mountain without hands, and that Brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold: The Great GOD hath Made known to the King What shall come to pass hereafter.*—*in. ii, 44, 45.*

Terrible to the contemplation is the condition that awaits them, who have *ed and died in wilful and persevering disobedience of the perfect and purifying Law of CHRIST through a dead inoperative faith; but still more tremendously awful the meditation upon the state of them, who daringly defy His power and set at nought His Proffered Mercy!* At the latter Day, when The *IVINE Favour must be Eternally Withdrawn from them, how will they then ll, but call in vain, on the Mountains and Hills to fall on them, and on the rocks to hide them from the anguish and horror and the stings of an accusing conscience!* Though our SAVIOUR Pointedly Addressed Himself to the Chief priests and Pharisees, of which they were, undoubtedly, conscious, yet so far *re they from profiting by His Merciful Warning and Admonition, that they ve their sin a deeper dye, and plunged themselves into irretrievable ruin by nfederating together and plotting the destruction of Him, Who would have rown His Everlasting Arms of Mercy and Love around them for their Salvation and their Spiritual joy: and from an act so desperately wicked, and fraught th the endless ruin of their peace, were they only, for a time, deterred by their ead of Popular indignation bursting upon them: thus manifesting that it was t a zealous and hallowed faith and thirst after the Honour of The True GOD at influenced them, but an arrogance of pride, an immoveable prejudice and a alousy of power, that actuated them; as otherwise they would not have feared hat Man could do unto them, when they, conscientiously at least, would have ought, that when they had The ALMIGHTY on their side, they might all trust that He would not have Suffered them to be confounded. Still t us not suppose that This Threatened Vengeance of HEAVEN is Confined to ese infidel Jews: it is the Language of Immutable Truth and Justice to All, th Jews and Gentiles, from Generation to Generation. Let us take heed, erefore, and remember that What GOD Said unto them, He Saith also unto us! d may we think gratefully and reverently and joyfully of This, The ROCK our Salvation amidst the storms and quicksands of sin and temptation; and erish in our hearts that purity and holiness, which are the fruits of a true th in CHRIST, through the Gift of The HOLY SPIRIT.*

**MAP. xxii.**—And JESUS Answered, and Spake unto them again by Parables, and Said,  "The KINGDOM of HEAVEN is like unto a certain King which made a marriage for his Son, and sent forth his Servants to call Them, that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come. Again he sent forth other Servants, saying, 'Tell Them, which are bidden, 'Behold, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage!'" But they made light of it, and went their ways, One to his farm, Another to his merchandize; and the Remnant took his Servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them. But when the King heard thereof, he was wroth, and he sent forth his Armies, and destroyed those Murderers, and burned up their city. Then saith he to his Servants, 'The wedding is ready; but they, which were bidden, were not worthy. Go ye, therefore, into the highways, and, as Many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage!'" So those Servants went out into the highways, and gathered together All, as many as they found, both bad and good; and the wedding was furnished with Guests."—1 to 10.

The chain of Parables as applied to the one Subject of the Coming of The KINGDOM of HEAVEN; and the variety of view in which the Same Object is Presented by our SAVIOUR, with the aid of Apostolically recorded exposition, form a beautiful and impressive series of Illustrations of the Great and Important and Consoling Truth, that The KINGDOM of GOD is Open to all

Believers, whether high or low, rich or poor, learned or unlearned : whilst they only will be for ever shut out from the Pale of Its perfect and unbroken Peace, who, being Invited to come in, by the Messengers either of the Law or the Gospel, or by the warnings of Conscience on the heart, yet refuse or neglect to obey the Call. The imagery under which the Visible Glories in the Life to Come, and the foretaste of them in the Life that is, are here brought under our contemplation, is that of an Earthly Monarch proclaiming the celebration of his Son's nuptials, and after circulating his invitations, and preparing every thing suited to the grandeur and attractiveness of the occasion, waiting beyond the time appointed, and, finding the Guests not come, sending once and again to urge their presence : but they perversely refused, preferring their own selfish occupations ; Some, indeed, in the wantonness of mockery and derision, added to their ingratitude abuse of the Messengers even to their destruction. Rarely does such return attend the condescensions of an Earthly Monarch ; for their invitations are regarded as commands, that almost at any sacrifice even of conscience or interest must be obeyed. But, alas ! how different is the treatment experienced by The KING of Kings from His Earthly Subjects ; even from the People of His Peculiar Choice. HE Prepared a Spiritual Feast of the most Exquisite Dainties on the Great and Merciful Event of the Marriage of His Only SON with His Church ; and Sent not only Patriarchs and Prophets to bid to that Feast, at which All, who eat with thankfulness of heart, shall be abundantly satisfied ; but finally Sent even His SON in all Gentleness and Sweetness and Persuasiveness to Confirm the assurance of the incomparable Excellence of the Feast, and of the Joy awaiting the Partakers of It. Since the Jews, as a Nation, rejected the Gospel Invitation, (though many Individuals amongst them cheerfully and gratefully accepted of and Gloried in It,) The FATHER of the Universe, Whose Providence and Mercy are over all Mankind, Called the Gentiles to this Everlasting Festival ; and thus to them, who had been disdainfully looked upon and haughtily treated by the prejudiced and arrogant Jews, as Strangers to the Covenant of Promise, and unworthy of Heavenly Food, and as living without the fear or Favour of The True GOD, were highly Exalted, and Blessed with the Manifestations of DIVINE Love, and gladdened and refreshed with Food from HEAVEN. To this Unfailing and ever-grateful Feast are All of us Invited ; and the only condition of our permanent admission to It is that of our putting on and continually wearing the Wedding Garment, Which is the Righteousness of Saints, and obtained only through faith in JESUS CHRIST, as The Free-Will Offerer of it. Its qualities are a pure and lively and operative faith in the Necessity and Efficacy of CHRIST'S Expiatory Sacrifice and Meritorious Mediation, a hearty repentance of all the evil we have committed by thought, word, or deed ; a consciousness of the general depravity of our Nature, and its intrinsic unfitness for the Holiness of HEAVEN ; an utter abhorrence of the ways and influence of Satan and of sin ; a determined dedication, under the supplicated Guidance and Assistance of The HOLY SPIRIT, of both Soul and Body to the Service and Glory of GOD, and the Honour of The LORD JESUS CHRIST, as both GOD and Man, The AUTHOR and FINISHER of our faith. With such a Garment, worn in the spirit of meekness and of thankfulness, whatever may have been our past misconduct in the commission of evil or omission of good, we shall be Received as Guests at the Table of our DIVINE LORD and MASTER JESUS CHRIST. But if we obtain not This Garment, and prepare not ourselves by prayer and supplication to receive It becomingly, though in the opinion of our Fellow-Mortals we may be adjudged worthy of It, or may arrogate to ourselves the confidence that we are so, yet at the Great Day of Final Trial and of Judgment It will be withheld from us ; and then, naked

and destitute and forsaken, what will befall us, but confusion and dismay and despair? And Truth will then flash on our minds the conviction of our unqualifiedness for Such Holy Communion and Fellowship, as will Surround The Incarnate SON of GOD.

The narrative given by St. Luke of this Parable, or, at least, of a very similar One, is as follows: *And One of them, that sat at meat with JESUS, said unto Him, "Blessed is he, that shall eat Bread in The KINGDOM of GOD!" Then Said JESUS unto him, "A certain Man made a great supper, and bade Many; and sent his Servant at supper time to say to them, that were bidden, 'Come! for all things are now ready.' And they all, with one consent, began to make excuse. The First said unto him, 'I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused.' And Another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused.' And Another said, 'I have married a Wife, and therefore I cannot come.' So that Servant came, and shewed his Lord these things. Then the Master of the House, being angry, said to his Servant, 'Go out quickly into the Streets and Lanes of the City, and bring in hither the Poor and the Maimed, and the Halt and the Blind!' And the Servant said, 'Lord, it is done, as thou hast commanded; and yet there is room!' And the Lord said unto the Servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges; and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled! for I say unto you, That None of those Men, which were bidden, shall taste of my Supper!'"*—Luke xiv, 15 to 24.

Of the Two, so far as any essential difference is observable in Them, That by St. Matthew seems the more applicable and illustrative; for his is the invitation of a King to his Subjects on a great and solemn and National occasion; and it is Prophetical of the Self-willedness, as well as of the Destiny of those, who reject the Invitation of The KING of Heaven. The incident, too, of the One amongst the After-Called, who, not having on a wedding garment, was expelled, (imaging, perhaps, those, who may be found amongst all Sects of professing Christians, and who rely presumptuously on their own fancied righteousness,) is additionally interesting and instructive, and arises with peculiar propriety out of so important a Lesson, as that which the remainder of the Parable is calculated to inculcate.

The invitations of earthly Sovereigns (as has been before remarked) are, by courtesy, considered as commands, even if not so expressed: but the Language and Conduct of The RULER of all the Sovereigns of the Earth are Those of the most Tender Parental Affection, as is beautifully illustrated in the Parable of the Prodigal Son, and in the Benevolent Address of CHRIST, "*Come unto Me, All ye that travail and are heavy laden, and I will Give you Rest!*" and again, "*Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after Righteousness; for they shall be Filled!*" And yet, though now homage is generally paid by All to Earthly Monarchs or Governors, without urging the pretext of particular occupation for withholding it, yet from The LORD of the Universe, Who Alone has the Bread of Life, and with Whom Alone it is to Save or Destroy Everlastingly, the Offers of Grace are neglected and despised, or deferred to a more imaginedly convenient season, and made to give way to every engagement of worldly interest or pleasure. The day especially Appointed by The GIVER of Life and health and all things, to be kept holy, in commemoration of The transcendantly Beneficial Dealings of GOD to Man, in Creation, Redemption, and Sanctification, instead of being dedicated to a participation in Spiritual exercises, so fraught with the purest delight to the pious Soul, is too often given up, even by professing Christians, to worldly conversation, if not to secular occupation: whilst the sensual Soul, preferring the mammon of unrighteousness to Spiritual Food, is thus bringing on

itself a famine of the Word of GOD. Unto the Communion of the Last Supper of our Merciful REDEEMER, The Incarnate SON of GOD, Who hath Given us His Body and Blood to partake of in spirit, that we may be Strengthened and Refreshed Thereby in the inner Man, but comparatively Few come, and still Fewer, it is feared, come with a contrite and believing heart, and a spirit round which the Wedding Garment can, by the Discerning Eye of The SPIRIT of GOD, be Thrown. The Word of Exhortation and Encouragement from the Ministering Priests, as representing their LORD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST, is set at nought, and, amidst every thing that is calculated to awaken them to a just discrimination between good and evil, they, in the infatuated blindness of their folly and perverseness, choose the evil and reject the good; preferring the good things, as they are falsely termed, the fleeting pleasures and unhallowed gratifications of this Life, to the fulness of Joy, amidst the Glorified Spirits, in the Paradise of GOD. Man, puffed up with the conception of his own intrinsic power and greatness, will not suffer himself to think in his heart, or to dwell on the thought (though he may outwardly not dispute it,) that there is ONE Greater than he, and on Whom All we have or hope for depends: and though, as declared by the Wisest of Men [Prov. ix, 1 to 6], *Wisdom hath builded her house; She hath heven out her seven pillars: She hath killed her beasts, She hath mingled her wine; She hath also furnished her table; She hath sent forth her Maidens; She crieth upon the highest Places of the City, "Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither!" as for him, that wanteth understanding, She saith to him, "Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine, which I have mingled! Forsake the Foolish, and live! and go in the way of understanding!"* Yet is her cry not heard, nor her invitation regarded: for Men prefer darkness, which is death, to light, which is life, because their deeds are evil. But the effect of this cannot be otherwise than to avert the Loving-kindness of The LORD, and to render ineffectual His Long-Suffering and Great Goodness, and to bring down upon the Soul (which is essentially immortal,) leanness and want and wretchedness and woe. For the affections, thus alienated from GOD, unfit and disqualify for the Purity of His Visual and Glorious Presence.

The destruction of Jerusalem, as the Punishment of its faithless Inhabitants, who, disowning the Day of the Gracious Visitation of The SON of GOD, persecuted Him in His Mortal Nature even unto death upon the Cross, had been foretold to them by their Prophet Daniel, when he said, *After threescore and two weeks shall MESSIAH be Cut off; but not for Himself: and the People of the Prince, that shall come, shall destroy the City and the Sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the War Desolations are Determined.*—Dan. ix. 26.

Amongst the Revelations Made to and recorded by St. John, is the following: *I heard, as it were, the Voice of a great Multitude, and as the Voice of many waters, and as the Voice of mighty thunderings, Saying, "Alleluia: for The LORD GOD Omnipotent Reigneth!" Let us be glad and rejoice and give Honour to Him: for the Marriage of the LAMB is Come; and His Wife hath Made herself ready: and to Her was Granted that She should be Arrayed in Fine Linen, Clean and White; for the Fine Linen is the Righteousness of Saints.* After which St. John thus proceeds: *And He (The Voice) Saith unto me, "Write, Blessed are they, which are Called unto the Marriage Supper of The LAMB."*—Rev. xix, 6 to 9. *And The SPIRIT and the Bride Say, "Come!"*—Rev. xxii, 17.

See St. Matthew xiii, 47, and the observations upon it.

"And when the King came in to see the Guests, he saw there a Man, which had not on a wedding garment. And he saith unto him, 'Friend! how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. Then said the King to the Servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness!' there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth! For Many are Called; but Few are Chosen."—11 to 14. △

St. Paul hath said, *We know that if our Earthly House of this Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a Building of GOD, an House, not made with hands, Eternal in the Heavens: for in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our House, Which is from Heaven: if so be, that being clothed, we shall not be found naked.*—2 Cor. v, 1 to 3.

Thus, as it is possible to be at a feast, amongst a large Assembly, without being invited, and when discovered as such Intruder, to be dismissed with contempt and punishment; so, though a Partaker of the Commemorative Sacrament of the Supper of The LORD, as a Christian by profession, if we have not the Spirit of CHRIST, and the faith that worketh by gratitude and love towards Him, we are None of His, and shall be expelled from the Glory of His Presence. For the Discerning Eye of The ALMIGHTY no Being can escape; and any Mortal assuming to be qualified for Heavenly Communion, and, perhaps, so adjudged by Fellow-Mortals, if wanting that faith in JESUS, which alone giveth Sanctification unto Holiness, such as is inseparable from the Inmates of Heaven, must, of necessity, be Driven from The DIVINE Presence, and be left to that darkness, where The DIVINE Countenance never Beams with Love. Hence is deducible the absolute necessity of more than an empty profession of faith, and also a life of devotion beyond the mere outward ceremonies of Religion. The same idea, though under a different character, is inculcated by the same Apostle, when he admonishes his Ephesian Correspondents, and through them all succeeding Generations of professing Christians, *to put off, concerning the former conversation, the old Man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of the mind; and to put on the new Man, which, after GOD, is created in Righteousness and true Holiness:* [Eph. iv, 22 to 24.] thus urging a total change of the dispositions and affections, by drawing them from the World and directing them to GOD, Purified by the Grace of His HOLY SPIRIT, Obtained for the Faithful as the First Fruits of CHRIST'S Sacrifice and Intercession on our behalf; Typified as a new Birth, or Regeneration of the Body, and Dressing the Soul in that Beauty of Holiness, with Which The HEAVENLY BRIDEGROOM will be Well-Pleased, when He Cometh to Take Possession of His BRIDE and KINGDOM, and Calleth them that are His, to witness the Brightness of His Coming and to share the Adornment of His Righteousness; Whose Ways are Wisdom, Whose Works are Mercy, and Whose Word is Truth. Under the same image is the following exhortation by St. Paul to the Colossians: *Lie not One to Another, seeing that ye have put off the old Man with his deeds, and have put on the new Man, which is renewed in knowledge after the Image of Him, That Created him:* and then insisting that Man, in himself, is nothing, and that CHRIST is All, and in All that are His, the Apostle goes on thus to describe what the Spiritual Dress of a true Christian is; exhorting All to seek to be clad in It, saying, *Put on, therefore, as the Elect of GOD, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing One Another, and forgiving One Another, if any Man have a quarrel against Any; even as CHRIST Forgave you, so also do ye! And, above all these things, put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness! And let the Peace of GOD rule in your hearts; to the Which also ye are Called in one Body; and be ye thankful!*



*Let the Word of CHRIST Dwell in you Richly in all Wisdom: Teaching and Admonishing One Another in Psalms and Hymns and Spiritual Songs; singing with Grace in your hearts to The LORD! And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in The Name of The LORD JESUS; giving thanks to GOD and The FATHER by Him!*—Col. iii, 9, 10, 11 to 17.

△ This is the Garment, with which The HOLY SPIRIT Provides us to take part in the Wedding Feast of The Incarnate SON of GOD with His Church, as His Bride; if we will but cleanse ourselves from all impurity of flesh and spirit, and by faith and repentance perfect Righteousness in the fear of GOD.

As the want of a Wedding Garment (the White Robe of the Saints,) will not only preclude any participation in the Delightful Feast of The LAMB, but will insure everlasting want and woe to such Unworthiness; so the assumption of the robe of whiteness by a ministering Priest, though he utter the Counsel of GOD, will not protect against the Visitation of Justice in the Judgment on his immortal Soul, if it have been defiled by inward pollutions; for with GOD is no Respect of Persons. But to them, *which have not defiled their garments*, the exalted Honour and inestimable Blessing is Promised, that *they shall walk with The LAMB in White*; and they, that by the Grace of The SPIRIT obtained that Precious Privilege through faith in The LAMB, *shall be clothed in White Raiment*; whilst the names of the Rejected shall be *Blotted out of the Book of Life*.—Rev. iii, 4, 5. *Blessed is he, therefore, that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and his shame be seen!*—Rev. xvi, 15.

On the miserable condition of Those, who, like the Stranger, presuming on their own righteousness in the Presence of The LORD and SAVIOUR of the World, will, like him, be for ever cast out of That SAVIOUR'S KINGDOM, Which is That of Holiness and Peace and never-ending Joy, some observations will be found at Chapter viii, 12. And on the Universality of CHRIST'S Mediatorial Offering, but on the limited Effect of It, through Spiritual pride and rejection of Its Terms see Chapter xx, 16. What an Enemy to himself is Man! Invited to that Feast of the Soul, Which is continually Serving up with still increasing gratification; Called to the fulness of the Delights of Heavenly Treasures and Heavenly Communion, of Which all the desirable riches and warrantable pleasures of this World are but a faint image, and to the enjoyment Thereof in such endless succession, he yet shuns This Offer of DIVINE Love, and steeps both Body and Soul in the carnal and mental indulgencies and besotments of this short and precarious Life! catching at the flatulent repast of pride or ambition, of letter-learning, or worldly knowledge, of vain conceit or boisterous mirth, which cloy in the possession, disappoint in the acquiring, and disgust in the end! Why, on the contrary, does not every Soul of Human-Kind walk humbly with GOD, its CREATOR and PRESERVER! That GOD, Who is Wisdom and Power, and yet Goodness and Mercy; and Delighting to Spread Happiness as Perfect and Pure as It is Lasting? If The ALMIGHTY only Called a Few, Man, through the perverseness of his disposition, would then, perhaps, be eager to be amongst the Few; but as All are Called without Respect of Persons, whether Young or Old, Rich or Poor, Learned or Unlearned, only Few, amongst the Millions existing in every Age, will have Salvation, because Few only will come, in penitence and humility and faithful dependance, unto CHRIST, that they may be Saved! But let us, who are amongst the Many Called, strive to be also amongst the Few Chosen; and to assist in bringing Others, over whom we have any influence, through the Power of The HOLY SPIRIT Working in us, within the Same Pale of Election and Grace; of Endless Peace and the Truest Prosperity! Then may Each of us exclaim, *I will greatly*

*rejoice in The LORD; my Soul shall be joyful in my GOD; for He hath Clothed me with the Garments of Salvation; He hath Covered me with the Robe of Righteousness, as a Bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a Bride adorneth herself with her jewels.—Isa. lxi, 10.*

Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle Him in His Talk: and they sent out unto Him their Disciples with the Herodians, saying, "Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the Way of GOD in Truth; neither carest thou for any Man: for thou regardest not the person of Men! Tell us, therefore, What thinkest thou: Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar or not?" But JESUS Perceived their wickedness, and Said, "Why tempt ye Me, ye Hypocrites? Shew Me the tribute-mony!" And they brought unto Him a penny. And He Saith unto them, "Whose is this image and superscription?" They say unto Him, "Cæsar's!" Then Saith He unto them, "Render, therefore, unto Cæsar, the things which are Cæsar's! and unto GOD, the Things That are GOD'S!" When they had heard These Words, they marvelled, and left Him, and went their way.—15 to 22.

How futile is all the wisdom of the World, when Opposed by That Wisdom, Which is from Above: it can only end in confusion and in final self-condemnation! But, alas! Pharisees still live, who, fondly clinging to their vain and haughty imaginations, and losing themselves often in critical discussions upon the Letter of Scripture, disregard Its Spirit, reject Its Influence on the heart and life, and despise that humbleness of mind, which, in becoming deference to The GIVER of Life and Light and All Things, ascribes and attributes to Him the truly discerning head and understanding heart. That Wisdom consists in yielding implicitly to the Admonitions and Guidance of The HOLY SPIRIT, Which are Freely and Graciously Offered and Imparted to All, who, in faith and humility, in the holy fear and cherished love of CHRIST, will receive Those Aids: in subservience to Which Human knowledge may be usefully applied; as was instanced by St. Paul, who, though wise above his Equals in years, in that knowledge, on which the very Pharisees, in the Text, prided themselves, yet, counting that as foolishness in the Sight of GOD, when compared with the knowledge of JESUS CHRIST, and Him Crucified, still employed in his writings and ministrations his manifold intellectual acquirements to confound the Disputers of this World.

The narrative, as given by St. Mark, is as follows: *And they send unto JESUS Certain of the Pharisees and of the Herodians to catch Him in His Words: and when they were come, they say unto Him, "Master, we know that thou art true, and carest for no Man; for thou regardest not the Person of Men; but teachest the Way of GOD in truth: Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or not? Shall we give? or shall we not give?" But He, Knowing their hypocrisy, Said unto them, "Why tempt ye Me? bring Me a penny, that I may See it." And they brought it: and He Saith unto them, "Whose is this image and superscription?" And they said unto Him, "Cæsar's." And JESUS Answering, Said unto them, "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to GOD the Things That are GOD'S!" And they marvelled at Him.—Chap. xii, 13 to 17.*

St. Luke gives the relation thus: *And the Chief Priests and the Scribes watched Him; and sent forth Spies, which should feign themselves just Men, that they might take hold of His Words, that so they might deliver Him unto the power and authority of the Governor: and they asked Him, saying, "Master, we know that thou sayest and teachest rightly; neither acceptest thou the Person of Any; but teachest the Way of GOD truly. Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Cæsar, or no?" But He Perceived their craftiness, and Said unto them, "Why tempt ye Me? Shew Me a penny! Whose image and superscription hath it?" They answered, and Said, "Cæsar's." And He Said unto them, "Render, therefore, unto*

*Cæsar the things which be Cæsar's; and unto GOD the Things Which be GOD'S.' And they could not take hold of His Words before the People: and they marvelled at His Answer, and held their peace.*—Chap. xx, 19 to 26.

The motive for this hypocritical application (prefaced, as it was, by that flattery which was intended to throw The TEACHER off His guard,) is afterwards thus additionally exposed by the same Evangelist, when relating the accusation brought against JESUS before the Roman Tribunal, and backed by the most wicked and malicious falsehood, saying, "*We found this Fellow perverting the Nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, saying that 'He, Himself, is CHRIST, a King.'*"—Luke xxiii, 2. Whence it is obvious why the Scribes and Pharisees, through their Spies, put the question they did, that they might artfully induce our SAVIOUR to Set up His Power and Authority against Cæsar's: and then they could safely accuse Him as a Traitor to the Roman Government: but being foiled in their aim, they resort to the baser expedient of an accusation the most opposed to the fact, in order to work upon the jealous feelings of the Representatives of Roman Power, and win their countenance to the accomplishment of their own vile purpose of putting an end, as they thought, to Him, Who so justly Accused them of perverting the judgment of the People, and Exposed their own depravity.

Would that these Herodians and Pharisees were the only monuments of Human perversity in uttering truth from their tongue, but having war in their hearts! with Satan's subtlety they sought to over-reach The SON of GOD; but, like him, they were confounded in their own wicked machinations. They approached The FOUNTAIN of Truth with an affected earnestness to drink of the Waters Thereof: but when the draught, which, if rightly received, would have been unto them as a Well-Spring of Life, was Poured out to them, they, in the weakness and presumption of Human folly, dashed the chalice from their lips. An object, which may originate with an evil purpose, is often aimed at through the semblance and profession of good: and though, in this finite state, Man may not penetrate the deceiving veil of such hypocrisy, yet the Party practising it, if he would reflect at all, should be conscious that his whole heart is open before GOD; and that nothing, which proceeds therefrom, can, by any effort or ingenuity, be hid from Him, Who Ever Looketh upon the heart, and Knoweth all Things. The end, which these wretched Victims of Pharisaical pride and prejudice had in view, was (as before observed,) the arraigning JESUS before the temporal Governors, to whom the Jews, as a conquered People, were then in subserviency, and to hold Him up to them as a Mover of sedition against the existing Authority by encouraging His Countrymen to withhold the accustomed tribute exacted from them. But *CHRIST'S KINGDOM was not of this World, and His Doctrine was Submission to the Powers that be!* Obedience of Servants to their Masters, of Subjects to their Governors, in all things not militating against that higher and paramount duty they One and All owe to their HEAVENLY MASTER, The LORD of Lords, and KING of Kings, was Inculcated. [See Chapter xvii, 25 to 27.] The admonition of the Gentile Apostle, though particularly addressed to the Roman Converts, is applicable to all Ages and Nations: *Let every Soul be subject unto the higher Powers: for there is no Power but of GOD: the Powers that be, are Ordained of GOD: Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the Power, resisteth the Ordinance of GOD: and they, that resist, shall receive to themselves damnation! For Rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the Power? Do that which is good; and thou shalt have praise of the Same! for he is the Minister of GOD to thee for good: but if thou do that which is evil, be afraid! for he beareth not the sword in vain; for he is the Minister of GOD, a Revenger to execute wrath*

upon him that doeth evil: wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For this cause, pay ye tribute also: for They are GOD'S Ministers, attending continually upon this very thing: Render, therefore, to All their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour!—Rom. xiii, 1 to 7. And that all power is from GOD, or Sanctioned by DIVINE Permission our SAVIOUR Himself Declared, when on Pontius Pilate Sitting in judgment upon Him, and asserting that he had power to crucify Him, and had power to release Him, JESUS Said, "Thou couldst have no power at all against Me, except it were Given thee from Above."—John xix, 10, 11. The doctrine of obedience to temporal Governors was also inculcated by St. Peter, thus: *Submit yourselves to every ordinance of Man for The LORD'S Sake; whether it be to the King as Supreme, or unto Governors, as unto them, that are sent by him for the punishment of evil Doers, and for the praise of them that do well: for so is the Will of GOD; that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish Men: as free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the Servants of GOD: honour all Men! love the Brotherhood! fear GOD! honour the King!*—1 Peter ii, 13 to 17. In his instructions to his Disciple Titus, whom St. Paul ordained to be a Minister over part of the Cretian Converts, he admonishes Titus to put them in mind to be subject to Principalities and Powers, to obey Magistrates, to be ready to every good work; to speak evil of no Man; to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all Men.—Titus iii, 1, 2.

In thus Sanctioning and Enjoining becoming homage to temporal Authority, our SAVIOUR equally Admonishes All, both High and Low, to pay due homage to their Universal LORD, The GOD of all Flesh; and to observe, with due reverence, His Laws, Which Apply to the Rich and Great, as well as to the Poor and Lowly. But Mankind, in general, are more observant of deference and respect to Earthly Princes and Governors than to their Spiritual SOVEREIGN, though He Ruleth all the Armies of Heaven, and the Earth is but as His Footstool; and on His Appointment and Destination hangs the Everlasting State of every Human Soul: indeed, Men, who would willingly sacrifice their Lives, in testimony of their loyalty to their Earthly King, will sometimes spurn the very mention of subserviency to the Will of their HEAVENLY KING, and withhold from Him the tribute of honour and of gratitude, that are so Richly Due to Him for His Providence and Grace. Such is the awfully deceiving influence of pride over the Human heart; and dreadful will be the result, when the Soul, awakening to a visual Eternity, sees all Things in their true light, and finds The OMNIPOTENT, Whom it rejected on Earth, Rejecting it eternally from the Mansions of Holiness and Happiness and Peace.

The Messengers, it seems, though, doubtless, chosen for their keenness and cunning, were utterly confounded; they were struck with silence as with wonder, and went their way. Had their hearts not been hardened as stone, they might have been everlastingly Blessed, by drawing Wisdom from Its Truest SOURCE. Had they really gone for the instruction and guidance they professed to seek, what delight would they have experienced at the Excellent Wisdom and Salutary Counsel Communicated in our SAVIOUR'S Answers! and how would they have gone on their way rejoicing at the Heavenly LIGHT, That had so Burst on their benighted faculties! No more would they have been the willing Victims of Pharisaic malevolence. May we lay This Lesson to heart, and, when listening to the Oracles of GOD, or making Them the subject of our reading, may we not spend our reflections in unprofitable wonder, but strive to improve Thereby, to mark and inwardly digest Them, that we may understand with our hearts, and regulate both our Lives and conversation correspondingly, in all honesty

and patience and perseverance, fulfilling our duties to our Earthly Superiors, as well as to our Equals and Inferiors, but most especially to our CREATOR, REDEEMER, and SANCTIFIER, The TRIUNE GOD!

△ The same day came to Him the Sadducees, which say that there is no Resurrection, and asked Him, saying, "Master, Moses said, 'If a Man die, having no Children, his Brother shall marry his Wife, and raise up Seed unto his Brother.' Now there were with us seven Brethren; and the First, when he had married a Wife, deceased; and, having no Issue, left his Wife unto his Brother: likewise the Second also, and the Third unto the Seventh: and last of all the Woman died also. Therefore, in the Resurrection, whose Wife shall she be of the Seven? for they all had her?" JESUS Answered, and Said unto them, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the Power of GOD! For in the Resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the Angels of GOD in Heaven. But as touching the Resurrection of the Dead, have ye not read That, Which was Spoken unto you by GOD, Saying, 'I Am The GOD of Abraham, and The GOD of Isaac, and The GOD of Jacob?' GOD is not The GOD of the Dead, but of the Living!" And when the Multitude heard This, they were astonished at His Doctrine.—23 to 33.

The Law, as laid down in the Mosaic Code, will be found in Deuteronomy xxv, 5 to 10.

The operation of this Law is confirmed by the early history of Ruth and her Mother in law Naomi, the Wife of Elimelech, for on the death of the Husband and two Sons of Naomi, Ruth, being the Widow of one of the Sons, and on Naomi determining to return to Israel (which she had left on account of a famine,) from Moab, whither she had taken refuge, and where her Sons took their Wives; and on her Daughters in law urging her to let them accompany her to her native Land, Naomi thus met their affectionate offer saying, *Turn again, my Daughters! why will ye go with me? are there yet any more Sons in my womb, that they may be your Husbands? Turn again, my Daughters, go your way! for I am too old to have an Husband. If I should say, I have hope; if I should have an Husband also to-night, and should also bear Sons, would ye tarry for them, till they were grown? would ye stay for them from having Husbands?*—Ruth i, 1 to 13.

In their application to our SAVIOUR, the Sadducees appear to have been actuated by no such reprehensible motive as the Pharisees; which is fairly to be inferred from the different reception they met with: for CHRIST did not Accuse the Sadducees, as He did the Pharisees, with being hypocrites, but Answered them in a Manner the most Earnestly Regardful of their Spiritual interests, as well as with the most unrefutable Reasoning. The Sadducees had been bred in the belief of a particular tenet; and understanding that CHRIST Taught a Doctrine directly opposed to it, they came to Him with a statement of imagined insurmountable difficulty for Him to Overcome, being of circumstances just possible, but probably supposititious. They came, therefore, if not with a desire for information, and to be set right, if they were wrong, having only that prejudice about them, which long habit naturally communicates when strengthened by plausible argument. Whether the opinion of the Sadducees, as regarded the Resurrection, was confined to the disbelief of any reunion between Soul and Body after death, by the rising of that Body from death unto Life; or whether they rejected all faith in any part of Human Nature, even the Soul living after the earthly death, may be matter not unworthy of consideration, nor difficult of solution, upon a careful investigation of history with reference to that particular Sect; but as this is not expressly disclosed in this part of Scripture, the fact is, in some degree, left to inference. The important Truth, however, for Man to know, is, that he must, of necessity, live in his Spiritual or Intellectual Part for ever; and his condition in all that Eternity of Being and of consciousness, which assuredly awaits him, whether happy or miserable, must depend on

his having secured or rejected, in this Life, the Favour of GOD, by cherishing or by setting at nought that faith in the Atoning Sacrifice and Meritorious Mediation of The SON of GOD, and that resignation to the Gracious and Purifying and Guiding Influence of The HOLY SPIRIT, Which by meekness, humility, obedience, and singleness of heart, alone qualify the Soul for Heavenly Society. This Truth admitted, we may safely leave to the Wisdom and Goodness of GOD, in the most unmeasured confidence, the nature of our Being in a future State, whether wholly Spiritual and Intellectual, or partly partaking of our Earthly Tabernacle, Regenerated, as seed by corruption in the ground, into an inconceivably more purified and beauteous State by the Revivifying and Refining Power of The HOLY GHOST: for we may rest assured that to those, who, in a future State find Favour in the Sight of GOD, nothing will be wanting to fill up the measure of their perfect Bliss. Whether the Soul, from the instant of its separation from the Body, retains a consciousness, and retains it under any new order of relationship, until the Resurrection of the Body at the Great Day of Universal Judgment, may be, and often is, questioned. And to that character of doubt, our SAVIOUR'S Answer on the occasion Seems Encouragingly to Apply.

The narrative of this very interesting interview, as given by St. Mark, is as follows: *Then come unto JESUS the Sadducees, which say "there is no Resurrection;" and they asked Him, saying, "Master, Moses wrote unto us, 'If a Man's Brother die, and leave his Wife behind him, and leave no Children, that his Brother should take his Wife, and raise up Seed unto his Brother.' Now there were seven Brethren, and the First took a Wife, and, dying, left no Seed; and the Second took her, and died, neither left he any Seed; and the Third likewise; and the Seven had her, and left no Seed: last of All the Woman died also: in the Resurrection, therefore, when they shall rise, whose Wife shall she be of them? for the Seven had her to Wife?" And JESUS Answering, Said unto them, "Do ye not, therefore, err, because ye know not the Scriptures, neither the Power of GOD? For when they shall rise from the Dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the Angels which are in Heaven. And as touching the Dead, that they rise, have ye not read in the Book of Moses? how in the Bush GOD Spake unto him, Saying, 'I Am The GOD of Abraham, and The GOD of Isaac, and The GOD of Jacob.' HE is not The GOD of the Dead, but The GOD of the Living! Ye, therefore, do greatly err!"*—Chap. xii, 18 to 27.

St. Luke's account is thus: *Then came to JESUS Certain of the Sadducees, which deny that there is any Resurrection; and they asked Him, saying, "Master, Moses wrote unto us, 'If any Man's Brother die, having a Wife, and he die without Children, that his Brother should take his Wife, and raise up Seed unto his Brother.' There were, therefore, seven Brethren; and the First took a Wife, and died, without Children; and the Second took her to Wife, and he died childless; and the Third took her; and in like manner the Seven also: and they left no Children, and died: last of All the Woman died also: therefore, in the Resurrection, whose Wife of them is she? for Seven had her to Wife." And JESUS Answering, Said unto them, "The Children of this World marry, and are given in marriage: but they, which shall be Accounted worthy to obtain that World, and the Resurrection from the Dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage; neither can they die any more; for they are equal unto the Angels, and are the Children of GOD, being the Children of the Resurrection. Now that the Dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the Bush, when he called The LORD 'The GOD of Abraham, and The GOD of Isaac, and The GOD of Jacob: for He is not A GOD of the Dead, but of the Living: for All live unto Him.'"*—Chap. xx, 27 to 38.

This Doctrine of the Sadducees is adverted to by St. Paul, when arraigned

before a Council of the Jewish Sanhedrim, and when *perceiving that the one Part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out, "Men and Brethren, I am a Pharisee, the Son of a Pharisee! Of the Hope and Resurrection of the Dead I am called in question!" And when he had so said, there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and the Sadducees; and the Multitude was divided: for the Sadducees say, "that there is no Resurrection; neither Angel, nor Spirit!" But the Pharisees confess Both.*—Acts xxiii, 6 to 8.

From hence, indeed, it should seem that our SAVIOUR'S Powerful Reasoning had not Wrought conversion in the minds of the Sadducees generally, and that their rejection of all faith in a Resurrection was not confined to the regeneration of the Body, but to the existence of the Soul in any after state; since they denied that there were either Angels or Spirits: and a doctrine more replete with error of the most distressing and destructive nature it is difficult to conceive: for though there is much of Providential Blessing in this Life, yet amidst the inequality of condition, the prevalence of physical and moral ill, the fate of Man, if terminating with this Life, would be, perhaps, (from the very possession of that, which is esteemed his highest honour and his chiefest good, the being an Intellectual Spirit after the Image of his MAKER,) in the disappointment of that Immortality, to which it cannot but soar in hope, the most miserable of all the Creatures of the whole Earth: and a change with the most insensible of the Brute Creation would, perhaps, be a change to be desired. The Mosaic institution, on which the Sadducees grounded their faith, is thus recorded in the last Book of the Pentateuch: *If Brethren dwell together, and One of them die, and have no Child, the Wife of the Dead shall not marry without unto a Stranger: her Husband's Brother shall go in unto her, and take her to him to Wife; and perform the duty of an Husband's Brother unto her: and it shall be that the First-born, which she beareth, shall succeed in the name of his Brother, which is dead, that his name be not put out of Israel.*—Deut. xxv, 5, 6. In the early age of the Jews, as a Nation, this Law should seem politic, as tending to preserve union within each Tribe, composing a distinct part of the National Family, and, thereby, most effectually discouraging all thought of sexual alliance with the Inhabitants of the Heathen Nations around them. But, however wise or politic as a Human Institution, the Sadducees manifested a most worldly and carnal-minded notion of the Glorified State in a World to come, to suppose, if any Such awaited us, that the narrow ties of Kindred and Conjugal Connection and familiar Acquaintance here would bind the Spirits, Raised to a Communion embracing all the Good and Excellent selected from Generation to Generation in all the Ages and in all the Nations of the World; when their affections should be altogether set on Heavenly Things, and their minds stored with Heavenly Wisdom, by the Full and Free Inspiration of The HOLY SPIRIT, so as to be fitted for The KINGDOM of HEAVEN, and the union in worship of The Then Visible JEHOVAH, with Cherubim and Seraphim and all the Angels of HEAVEN, in one bond of holy love and pure and Spiritual Fellowship. The disunion in A Kingdom Characterised peculiarly as A Kingdom of Peace and Holiness, to which the revival of such mixed and prejudiced Relationships as exist on Earth, would give rise, seemed, to the Sadducees, a sufficient reason for denying an After State and the Resurrection, which would lead to it. And that such will not be the effect of our rising to Newness of Life is Confirmed by The LORD of Life Himself: but then the consequences drawn from it are, happily for us, far different: we are not to cease to exist after this Life, because our carnal Relationships and peculiar Personal attachments here are not to survive; but we are to enter upon a Pure State of Being and of holier affection, in which our most perfect and justifiable attachments upon Earth will be merged; in

which the want of them will not be felt, so Full will be the Measure of our Bliss in our new Association. Our SAVIOUR, therefore, Said to these misguided or misjudging Sadducees, "*Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the Power of GOD.*" The Scriptures had declared the Promise of The LORD to His faithful Servant Abraham, *that he should go to his Fathers in peace; that he should be buried in a good old age.*—Gen. xv, 15. And they frequently speak of Death by its symbol, sleep, as in the case of David, it is said in the 1st Kings ii, 10: *So David slept with his Fathers, and was buried in the City of David.* The Scriptures also declared this Further Promise of GOD to Abraham: "*I will Establish My Covenant between Me and thee, and thy Seed after thee in their Generations for an Everlasting Covenant, to be A GOD unto thee, and to Thy Seed after thee; and I will Give unto thee, and to thy Seed after thee, the Land, wherein thou art a Stranger, all the Land of Canaan, for an Everlasting Possession; and I will be their GOD.*"—Gen. xvii, 7, 8.

Now sleep, being only a temporary suspension of the consciousness of union between the Soul and Body, which consciousness is restored when sleep ends, and as sleep is succeeded by waking, so, doubtless, are these leading characteristics of sleep exemplified in Death; as otherwise the type would be, in the most essential point, imperfect: and how could The ORACLE of Wisdom and Truth and Goodness Declare that Abraham should go to his Fathers in peace, as the Consummation of His Gracious and Merciful Reward for Abraham's acknowledged obedience and fidelity, if the effect of it were only to sink into a state of total inanity? What consolation would Abraham have derived from The ALMIGHTY'S Assurance of an Everlasting Possession to him and his Seed, if that Promise were confined to mere territorial possession in this short and precarious Life; and had not been considered as a figure of a Spiritual Inheritance in a Life beyond the grave? For, in fact, the Land of Canaan was never possessed by Abraham, nor was it even by his Descendants until many Generations afterwards, under the Guidance of Joshua, the Successor of Moses. It is, therefore, alike inconsistent with the Veracity as well as Goodness of GOD, and with the imparted Gift of reason in Man, that These Scriptures should be understood otherwise than as Declaratory of a Life to Come beyond the present, in the Land or Habitation of Spirits. How, otherwise, could Abraham have possibly understood the still Further Gracious Promise of GOD, when Foretelling the birth to him of a Son in his old age by his Wife Sarai, (who had thitherto been barren, and was then also well stricken in years, so as to be past the usual period of Child-bearing,) Saying, "*Sarah, thy Wife, shall bear thee a Son indeed, and thou shalt call his name Isaac; and I will Establish My Covenant with him for an Everlasting Covenant, and with his Seed after him.*" [Gen. xvii, 19.] when he was Commanded by GOD to offer up that very Son Isaac, in his comparative youth, in sacrifice? In the Delivery of a Continuation of That Promise to Jacob, as recorded in a subsequent part of the Mosaic History, GOD Said, "*I Am The LORD GOD of Abraham thy Father, and The GOD of Isaac.*"—Gen. xxviii, 13, and Exod. iii, 6 to 16; see also Gen. xlvi, 2, 3; see also Acts vii, 32.

Had Abraham ceased Spiritually to exist, when his body died, The DIVINE Language would properly have been, "I, The LORD, Who Was The GOD of Abraham, thy Father, and Am now the GOD of Isaac, Am also thy GOD." But as our SAVIOUR Observes in the Text, and as is obvious to All, but the wilfully Blind through prejudice or other evil motives, "*GOD is not The GOD of the Dead, but of the Living.*" And though Abraham was dead in the flesh, yet his Soul, being immortal, and Blest with GOD'S Favour, if it slept, must have slept in the Bosom of its SAVIOUR to awake at the Resurrection to its full measure of Beatification. In the Scripture last referred to, allusion is made, in



the dream of Jacob, to the Angels of GOD in a manner that impels to the conclusion that the Jews, generally, believed in the existence of such Beings; though the Sadducees, as by the passage in the Acts xxiii, 8, *denied that there was either Angel or Spirit*. The entertainment given both by Abraham and Lot to Angels; the express mention in the continuation of Jacob's history, that he went on his way, and the Angels of GOD met him, and Jacob's declaration, when he saw them (not in a vision), *This is GOD'S Host!* [Gen. xxxii, 1, 2.] with various other Passages of Holy Writ, Shew that the Sadducees were either grossly negligent in reading the Scriptures, or grossly perverse in the understanding of Them. If Jacob had not a hope of a Resurrection, what could it have signified to him, whether he had been buried in the Land of Goshen or in Canaan, where he was equally a Stranger? and why, as amongst the last acts of his life, should he exact a solemn oath from his favourite and affectionate and trust-worthy Son Joseph, *to bury him with his Fathers?*—Gen. xlvii, 29, 30. Why, also, on his death bed, when pouring out his blessings on his Offspring, should he, almost with his latest breath, break forth into that beautiful apostrophe, *I have waited for Thy Salvation, O LORD!* [Gen. xlix, 18.] if having till that time waited, and waited patiently, the next hour was to annihilate him from the scale of Being, both from the experience and the hope of any after-existence? To what but Spiritual Blessings in an After-State could Jacob refer when, in his benediction on his Son Joseph, he said, *The GOD of thy Father shall help thee, and The ALMIGHTY shall Bless thee with Blessings of Heaven Above:* and then acknowledging, in Spiritual triumph, that *the Blessings of himself had prevailed above the Blessings of his own Progenitors, unto the utmost bound of the Everlasting Hills,* adds, *They shall be on the head of Joseph.*—Gen. xlix, 25, 26. In the Song of Moses, that Prophet, who held such high Converse with GOD, thus expresses himself: *The LORD is my Strength and Song, and is Become my Salvation! HE is my GOD, and I will prepare Him an Habitation: my Father's GOD and I will exalt Him! O LORD, Thou, in Thy Mercy, hast Led forth the People, which Thou hast Redeemed: Thou hast Guided them in Thy Strength unto Thy Holy Habitation.*—Exod. xv, 2. 11 to 13.

How inapplicable is language so sublimely triumphant to a mere temporal Deliverance; more particularly when, if considered as Prophetical, Moses himself knew that the Deliverance from a worse bondage than that of the Egyptians, a Deliverance from the evil within them, would not be perfected in his own lifetime. After the Revelation, Which GOD had Made to Moses, of His Power and Greatness, after the Promise of Salvation had been Proclaimed, and the Commandments had been Delivered to him, even after Moses had been with The ALMIGHTY in the Mount, he yet prayed unto Him, saying, *If I have found Grace in Thy Sight, Shew me now Thy Way, that I may know Thee; that I may find Grace in Thy Sight!* And The LORD Said, *"MY Presence shall Go with thee; and I will Give thee Rest!"*—Exod. xxxiii, 13, 14. Now what Rest did Moses find on Earth? and was he not weary of his life by reason of the rebellion of the People? Why does Balaam, when Guided by The SPIRIT of Truth, after delivering his Parable, in Prophetic assertion of the prosperity of Israel, against both the anxious desire and interest of his Kingly Patron Balak, say, *Let me die the death of the Righteous, and let my last end be like his!*—Num. xxiii, 10. How could the last end of the most Righteous be an object of such impressive and earnest desire, without any faith in or hope of a Resurrection? How is the Covenant, Which GOD Made with Phinehas for his zeal in the cause of Righteousness, (Saying, *"Behold, I Give unto him My Covenant of Peace; and he shall have It and his Seed after him; even the Covenant of an Everlasting Priesthood,"*—Num. xxv, 12, 13) to be otherwise interpreted than as having relation

to That Temple, Which is not made with hands, but is Eternal in the Heavens? How can the Act of The LORD, in Ordering Moses, in the same instant that He Announced to him the approach of his dissolution, to go up to the Mount Abarim, and see the Land, which in The DIVINE Destination was prospectively Allotted to the Children of Israel, be Reconciled with the Mercy and Loving-Kindness of The LORD, if Moses, in that view, did not Spiritually discern the Spiritual Land of Promise, into Which he and all the Elect People of GOD would finally enter, and which they would possess for ever; whether Inhabitants of the Terrestrial Canaan, or not? And why does Moses, in answer, as it were, call upon The LORD, as *The GOD of the Spirits of all Flesh*, if he did not fortify his own Spirit with the consoling belief, that both Flesh and Spirit would awake to a joyful Resurrection? So also when he said, *I call Heaven and Earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you Life and Death, Blessing and Cursing! therefore choose Life, that both thou and thy Seed may live; that thou mayest love The LORD, thy GOD, and that thou mayest obey His Voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto Him; for He is thy Life, and The Length of thy days; that thou mayest dwell in the Land, which The LORD Swore unto thy Fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to Give them.*—Deut. xxx, 19, 20 Again, in his beautiful Song, when he bursts into a Paternal exclamation to awaken his adopted Children to holiness, he says, *Oh, that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!*—Deut. xxxii, 29. What title to such serious and all-absorbing contemplation can that State have, which would be a State on the immediate border of insensibility and annihilation, if there be no Resurrection after Death, and no Spiritual World to come upon us? In the blessing pronounced by Moses (*that Man of GOD*, as he is emphatically styled before his death,) upon the Children of Israel, he said, *The LORD Came from Sinai; He Came with ten Thousands of Saints; from His Right Hand went a fiery Law for them: Yea, He Loved the People; all His Saints are in Thy Hand: and they sat down at Thy Feet: every One shall receive of Thy Words.*—Deut. xxxiii, 1 to 3. Are not these Saints the Spirits of the Dead Made Perfect? How is it reconcilable even to any rational idea of GOD'S Justice, to suppose that when He Addressed Joshua, as Moses' Appointed Successor, Saying, "*Moses, My Servant, is dead.*" [Josh. i, 2.] that that Moses, whom The LORD of all Power and of all Being, and of the Spirits of all Flesh, Condescended to Acknowledge as His Own Servant, who had toiled through a long life in furthering the Will and executing the Commandments of his GOD, persecuted and opposed, without peace and without rest upon Earth, should, at the end of his labours, be swept from all consciousness of Being, and become as though he never had been? When Joshua, on his deathbed, declared, *Behold, this day I am going the way of all the Earth:* [Josh. xxiii, 14.] having only towards the close of his eventful life known what rest was, and when with his latest breath he earnestly called upon his Countrymen to follow implicitly and in all humility and reverence the Commandments of their GOD, is it to be supposed that his own Soul was not then Supported with the consoling assurance that an Eternal Rest in the Bosom and Favour of his SAVIOUR GOD awaited him; and that through The SON of DIVINE Love there remained a Spiritual and Heavenly Rest for the People of GOD? What can be meant by the frequent mention in the Scriptures of *being gathered unto their Fathers*, as for instance, that *all that Generation* of the People, who had lived in the days of Joshua, and in the days of the Elders that out-lived Joshua, *were gathered unto their Fathers* [Jud. ii, 10.], but as connected with a State of Existence beyond the grave? And is not the usage among the Jews of paying peculiar respect to the mortal remains of their deceased Fathers, (as in the removal of *the bones of*

*Joseph* from Egypt, Josh. xxiv, 32,) a strong presumption that they thought of them otherwise than as mere dust of the Earth; regarding them as having the seeds of another Life, generating under the Mighty Power and Goodness of A Gracious GOD? To what do those passages in the Song of Hannah, on the birth of Samuel, *My heart rejoiceth in The LORD: I rejoice in Thy Salvation: The LORD Killeth, and Maketh Alive: He Bringeth down to the Grave; and Bringeth up: He will Keep the feet of His Saints; and the Wicked shall be silent in darkness: The LORD shall Judge the Ends of the Earth:* [1 Sam. ii, 1. 6. 9, 10.] allude but to That Spiritual Deliverance, Which Awaits the Final Judgment upon all Flesh? GOD is A SPIRIT; and He is The GOD of Spirits; and we know within ourselves, that whilst the Body is alive, the Spirit is alive also: and we see the effects of Death on the Bodies of Others: but there is nothing that leads to a conclusion that the Spirit dies also. The invocation of the Spirit of Samuel by Saul through the Witch of Endor, as stated in the xxviii Chapter of 1st Samuel, shewed a belief by Saul in the existence of the Spirit separate from the Body; and the declaration made by Samuel in that state to Saul, that *to-morrow shalt thou and thy Sons be with me!* Samuel himself being then a living Spirit, though dead in the flesh, is a strong ground for belief, that the Jews, in general, had faith in the existence of the Spirit after its separation from the Body. Why did Elijah pray *that the Soul* of the Widow of Zarephath's Son *might come into him again!* [1 Kings xvii, 21.] if he did not believe that the Soul existed notwithstanding its separation from the Body? By the Word of The LORD, Spoken by the Prophet Nathan unto David, Saying, *When thy days be expired that thou must go to be with thy Fathers:* [1 Chron. xvii, 11.] it is fairly to be assumed that the Royal Psalmist was led to calculate on a state of Being after death, when the Soul's and Body's union in this Life was dissolved. In the aspirations of the pious, but patiently afflicted Job, how are the following passages to be understood as proceeding from One, whose views of Being were limited to the Life in this World: *The LORD Gave; and The LORD hath Taken away! Blessed be the Name of The LORD!*—Chap. i, 21. *Shall we receive Good at the Hand of GOD; and shall we not receive evil?*—ii, 10. *Why did I not from the womb? Why did I not give up the Ghost when I came out of the belly? For now should I have lain still and been quiet; I should have slept; then had I been at rest. There the Wicked cease from troubling; and there the Weary be at rest: there the Prisoners rest together; they hear not the voice of the Oppressor: the Small and the Great are there: and the Servant is free from his Master.*—iii, 11. 13. 17 to 19. *Is there not an Appointed time to Man upon Earth? Are not his days also like the days of an Hireling?*—vii, 1. *We are but of yesterday; and know nothing; because our days upon Earth are a Shadow.*—viii, 9. *If a Man die, shall he live again? All the days of my Appointed time will I wait, till my change come.*—xiv, 14. *I know that my REDEEMER Liveth, and that He shall Stand at The Latter Day upon the Earth; and, though after my skin worms destroy this Body, yet in my Flesh shall I see GOD: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold; and not Another; though my reins be consumed within me.*—xix, 25 to 27. *Do ye not know their tokens; that the Wicked is Reserved to the Day of Destruction? they shall be brought forth to the Day of Wrath.*—xxi, 29, 30. *Wherefore do the Wicked live, become old, ye, are mighty in power? they spend their days in wealth; and in a moment go down to the grave. GOD Layeth up his iniquity for his Children; He Rewardeth him; and he shall know it: his eyes shall see his destruction, and he shall drink of the Wrath of The ALMIGHTY.*—xxi, 7. 13. 19, 20. *As GOD Liveth, Who hath Taken away my judgment; and The ALMIGHTY, Who hath Vexed my Soul; all the while my breath is in me, and The Spirit of GOD is in my nostrils, my lips*

shall not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter deceit: till I die I will not remove mine integrity from me; my righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go: my heart shall not reproach me so long as I live. What is the hope of the Hypocrite; though he hath gained, when GOD Taketh away his Soul!—xxvii, 2 to 6. 8. The Words of JEHOVAH, when Answering Job, “Have the gates of Death been opened unto thee? or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of Death?” [xxxviii, 17.] imply that something different from utter and universal extinction, without discrimination of good or evil, awaits the termination of the present Life. Amongst the devout aspirations of the sweet and Royal Psalmist of Israel, the following seem peculiarly supportive of his conviction of a future state of existence beyond the grave: *The LORD shall Endure for ever! He hath Prepared His Throne for Judgment; and He shall Judge the World in Righteousness: He shall Minister Judgment to the People in Uprightness. The Wicked shall be turned into Hell; and all the Nations, that forget GOD!*—Ps. ix, 7, 8. 17. *I have set The LORD always before me; because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved; therefore my heart is glad, and my Glory rejoiceth; my flesh also shall rest in hope; for Thou wilt not Leave my Soul in Hell! Thou wilt Shew me the Path of Life: in Thy Presence is Fulness of Joy! At Thy Right Hand there are Pleasures for Evermore!*—xvi, 8 to 11. *As for me, I will behold Thy Face in Righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy Likeness.*—xvii, 15. *How Excellent is Thy Loving-Kindness, O GOD! therefore the Children of Men put their trust under the Shadow of Thy Wings: they shall be Abundantly satisfied with the Fatness of Thy House; and Thou shalt Make them drink of the River of Thy Pleasures: for with Thee is the Fountain of Life; in Thy Light shall we see Light.*—xxxvi, 7 to 9. *The LORD Loveth Judgment, and Forsaketh not His Saints: they are Preserved for Ever! Mark the perfect Man; and behold the Upright! for the end of that Man is Peace!*—xxxvii, 28. 37. *As for me Thou Upholdest me in mine integrity; and Settest me before Thy Face for Ever!*—xli, 12. *My Soul thirsteth for GOD: for The Living GOD! when shall I come, and appear before GOD?*—xlii, 2. *They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches, None of them can by any means redeem his Brother, nor give to GOD a ransom for him; (for the Redemption of their Soul is Precious; and it ceaseth for ever;) that he should still live for ever, and not see corruption.*—xlix, 6 to 9. *GOD will Redeem my Soul from the power of the Grave! for He shall Receive me.*—15. *Our GOD shall Come! HE shall Call to the Heavens from Above, and to the Earth, that He may Judge His People!*—1, 3, 4. *I am like a green olive tree in the House of GOD: I trust in the Mercy of GOD for Ever and Ever: I will praise Thee for Ever, because Thou hast Done it; and I will wait on Thy Name, for it is good before Thy Saints.*—lii, 8, 9. *Verily there is a Reward for the Righteous! Verily He is A GOD, That Judgeth in the Earth.*—lviii, 11. *GOD hath Spoken Once: twice have I heard This, that Power Belongeth unto GOD: also unto Thee, O LORD, Belongeth Mercy: for Thou Renderest to every Man according to his Work.*—lxii, 11, 12. *O Thou, That Hearest prayer, unto Thee shall All Flesh come! Blessed is the Man whom Thou Choorest, and Causest to approach unto Thee; that he may dwell in Thy Courts!*—lxv, 2. 4. *HE, That is our GOD, is The GOD of Salvation: and unto GOD, The LORD, Belong the Issues from Death.*—lxviii, 20. *My flesh and my heart faileth; but GOD is the Strength of my heart, and my Portion for Ever.*—lxxiii, 26. *I will praise Thee, O LORD, my GOD, with all my heart, and I will glorify Thy Name for evermore; for Great is Thy Mercy towards Me; and Thou hast Delivered my Soul from the lowest Hell.*—lxxxvi, 12, 13. *What Man is he, that liveth, and shall not see Death? Shall he deliver his Soul from the hand of the grave?*—lxxxix, 48. *Rejoice before The LORD! for He Cometh; for He Cometh to Judge the Earth! HE shall*

*Judge the World with Righteousness, and the People with His Truth.*—xcvi, 12, 13; xcvi, 9. *Ye, that love The LORD, hate evil! He Preserveth the Souls of His Saints.*—xcvii, 10. *The Mercy of The LORD is from Everlasting to Everlasting upon them that fear Him.*—ciii, 17. *The Dead praise not The LORD; neither Any that go down into silence: but we will bless The LORD from this time forth and for evermore.*—cxv, 17, 18. *THE LORD shall Preserve thee from all evil! He shall Preserve thy Soul! The LORD shall Preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth and even for evermore!*—cxxi, 7, 8. *Search me, O GOD, and Know my heart! Try me and Know my thoughts! And See if there be any wicked way in me; and Lead me in the Way Everlasting!*—cxxxix, 23, 24.

The following passages from the Proverbs of Solomon, seem forcibly to support the same view: *As the whirlwind passeth, so is the Wicked no more: but the Righteous is an everlasting foundation.*—Chap. x, 25. *In the way of Righteousness is Life; and in the pathway thereof there is no death.*—xii, 28. *The way of Life is Above to the Wise, that he may depart from Hell beneath.*—xv, 24. *The LORD hath Made all Things for Himself, yea, even the Wicked for the Day of Evil.*—xvi, 4. *The hoary head is a crown of Glory, if it be found in the way of Righteousness.*—xvi, 31. In the Book of Ecclesiastes, (from the same Teacher, whose wisdom, surpassing that of all Mankind, came to him as a Gift from Above,) the following selections have a similar tendency: *GOD shall Judge the Righteous and the Wicked! That, which befalleth the Sons of Men, befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them! as the One dieth, so dieth the Other; All go unto one Place: All are of the dust: and All turn to dust again! Who knoweth the Spirit of Man, that goeth upward; and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the Earth?*—iii, 17, 19, 20, 21. *Thou knowest not what is the way of the Spirit.*—xi, 5. *Then shall the dust return to the Earth, as it was; and the Spirit shall return unto GOD, Who Gave it. Fear GOD, and keep His Commandments; for this is the whole duty of Man: for GOD shall Bring every Work into Judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.*—xii, 7, 13, 14.

△ The Prophet Isaiah, whose views of Man's Destiny, in reference to The MESSIAH'S Character and Office of MEDIATOR in a Judgment to Come, were peculiarly clear and illustrative, thus expresses himself: *Say ye to the Righteous! "that it shall be well with him;" for they shall eat the fruit of their doings! Woe unto the Wicked; it shall be ill with him: for the reward of his hands shall be given him! The LORD Standeth up to Plead; and Standeth to Judge the People.*—Chap. iii, 10, 11, 13. *The LORD of Hosts will Swallow up Death in Victory; and The LORD GOD will Wipe away tears from off all faces: and the rebuke of His People shall He Take away from off all the Earth: for The LORD hath Spoken It; and it shall be said in that Day, "Lo! This is our GOD! we have waited for Him; and He will Save us! This is The LORD! we have waited for Him; we will be glad and rejoice in His Salvation!"*—xxv, 6, 8, 9. *Trust ye in The LORD for ever! for in The LORD JEHOVAH is Everlasting Strength. O LORD, Thy dead Men shall live; together with my dead Body shall they arise. Awake and sing ye, that dwell in dust! for thy dew is as the dew of herbs; and the Earth shall cast out the Dead!*—xxvi, 4, 17, 19. *The work of Righteousness shall be Peace; and the effect of Righteousness Quietness and Assurance for ever.*—xxxii, 17. *There is no Peace, Saith The LORD, unto the Wicked.*—xlviii, 22. *"MY Righteousness, Saith The LORD, is Near; My Salvation is Gone forth; and Mine Arms shall Judge the People: the Isles shall wait upon Me; and on Mine Arm shall they trust. Lift up your eyes to the Heavens; and look upon the Earth beneath! For the Heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the Earth shall wax old like a garment; and they, that dwell therein, shall die in*

like manner: but My Salvation shall be for Ever; and My Righteousness shall not be Abolished."—li, 5, 6. *All the Ends of the Earth shall see the Salvation of our GOD.*—lii, 10. "Incline your ear, and come unto Me! (Saith The LORD;) hear! and your Soul shall live: and I will Make an Everlasting Covenant with you, even the Sure Mercies of DAVID."—lv, 3. *Since the beginning of the World Men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O GOD, beside Thee, What He hath Prepared for him, that waiteth for Him.*—lxiv, 4.

The Prophet Jeremiah thus countenances the same conclusion as to the Jewish belief in an After-State: *Thus Saith The LORD, "Stand ye in the ways; and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the Good Way, and walk therein! and ye shall find rest for your Souls."*—Chap. vi, 16. "I, The LORD, Search the heart; I Try the reins; even to Give every Man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings."—xvii, 10. *Ah! LORD GOD! Great in Council and Mighty in Work! for Thine Eyes are Open upon all the ways of the Sons of Men, to Give every One according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.*—xxxii, 17, 19. *THE LORD GOD of Recompences shall surely Requite.*—li, 56. In his lamentations at the Captivity of Judah, the same Inspired Writer thus gathers Consolation from the Prospect, that was Prophetically before him: *It is of The LORD'S Mercies that we are not Consumed; because His Compassions Fail not: They are New every morning. THE LORD is my Portion, saith my Soul; therefore will I hope in Him. THE LORD is Good unto them, that wait for Him; to the Soul, that seeketh Him! It is good that a Man should both hope and quietly wait for the Salvation of The LORD: for The LORD will not Cast off for Ever: but, though He Cause grief, yet will He have Compassion according to the Multitude of His Mercies.*—iii, 22 to 26. 31, 32.

The language of the Prophet Ezekiel, if Spiritually understood, applies, throughout, to a Future State of Retribution. The first of the following quotations is a figure within a figure, but will probably be literally Fulfilled. The last decisively points to the Spiritual and Everlasting Salvation of the Souls of Such, as are, or will be, or have been, Israelites indeed: *Thus Saith The LORD GOD, "Behold, O My People, I will Open your graves, and Cause you to come up out of your graves, and Bring you into the Land of Israel; and ye shall know that I am The LORD, when I have Opened your graves, O My People, and Brought you up out of your graves, and shall Put My SPIRIT in you; and ye shall live; and I shall Place you in your own Land."*—Chap. xxxvii, 12 to 14. *Thus Saith The LORD GOD, "Behold, I will Take the Children of Israel from among the Heathen, whither they be gone, and will Gather them on every side, and Bring them into their own Land: they shall dwell in the Land that I have Given unto Jacob, My Servant, wherein your Fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they and their Children, and their Children's Children for ever: and My SERVANT DAVID shall be their PRINCE for Ever! Moreover I will Make a Covenant of Peace with them: It shall be an Everlasting Covenant with them! and I will Place them, and Multiply them, and will Set My Sanctuary in the midst of them for Evermore."*—xxxvii, 21, 25, 26.

The Prophet Daniel also speaks of A Judgment to come, in language not to be misunderstood: *There shall be a time of trouble, such as never was, since there was a Nation, even to that same time; and at that time Thy People shall be Delivered, Every One, that shall be Found Written in the Book. And Many of them, that sleep in the dust of the Earth, shall awake; Some to Everlasting Life; and Some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they, that be wise, shall shine as the brightness of the Firmament; and they, that turn Many to Righteousness, as the Stars for ever and ever.*—Chap. xii, 1 to 3. *And Daniel said, "O my LORD, what shall be the end of these things?" And He Said, "Go thy way, Daniel, for*

*The Words are Closed up and Sealed till the time of the End. Go thy way till the End be! for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy Lot at the end of the Days.*—xii, 8, 9. 13.

The Prophet Hosea saith, *Come, and let us return unto The LORD; for He hath Torn, and He will Heal us! He hath Smitten, and He will Bind us up: after two days will He Revive us: in the third day He will Raise us up; and we shall live in His Sight.*—Chap. vi, 1, 2. The following Declaration of The ALMIGHTY, by the mouth of the last-named Prophet, though Addressed, in particular, to the Jews, Affords to All additional Assurance of a Resurrection: *"I Am The LORD, thy GOD, from the Land of Egypt; and thou shalt know no GOD but Me; for there is no SAVIOUR beside Me. I will Ransom them from the power of the grave: I will Redeem them from death. O Death, I will be thy Plagues! O Grave, I will be thy Destruction."*—xiii, 4. 14. The Prophet himself then says, *The Ways of The LORD are Right; and the Just shall walk in Them: but the Transgressors shall fall Therein.*—xiv, 9.

The Prophet Joel thus pours forth his admonition, confirmatory of the same Great Truth; and using, at the opening, the Very Language of JEHOVAH: *"Blow ye the Trumpet in Zion; and sound an Alarm in My Holy Mountain! Let all the Inhabitants of the Land tremble! for the Day of The LORD Cometh; for It is Nigh at hand."*—Chap. ii, 1.

From Others of the Minor Prophets, the following Passages lead to the same conclusion: *I will look unto The LORD, I will wait for The GOD of My Salvation. Rejoice not against me, O mine Enemy, when I fall, I shall arise: when I sit in darkness, The LORD shall be A Light unto me. I will bear the Indignation of The LORD, because I have sinned against Him, until He Plead my cause, and Execute Judgment for me: He will Bring me forth to the Light; and I shall behold His Righteousness. Who is A GOD like unto Thee, That Pardoneth iniquity, and Passeth by the transgression of the Remnant of His Heritage? HE Retaineth not His Anger for Ever, because He Delighteth in Mercy: He will Turn again, He will have Compassion upon us: He will Subdue our iniquities: and Thou wilt Cast all their sins into the Depths of the Sea: Thou wilt Perform the Truth to Jacob, and the Mercy to Abraham, Which Thou hast Sworn unto our Fathers from the days of old.*—Micah vii, 7 to 9. 18 to 20. *Art Thou not from Everlasting, O LORD, My GOD, mine HOLY ONE? We shall not die, O LORD.*—Hab. i, 12. *The Just shall live by his faith.*—Hab. ii, 4. *Although the fig-tree shall not blossom; neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet I will rejoice in The LORD, I will joy in The GOD of my Salvation.*—Hab. iii, 17, 18. *Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, O Nation not desired; before the Decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce Anger of The LORD Come upon you, before the Day of The LORD'S Anger Come upon you! Seek ye The LORD all ye Meek of the Earth, which have wrought His Judgment! Seek Righteousness! seek meekness! It may be ye shall be Hid in the Day of The LORD'S Anger.*—Zeph. ii, 1 to 3. *Then they, that feared The LORD, spake often One to Another; and The LORD Hearkened and Heard it: and a Book of Remembrance was Written before Him for them, that feared The LORD, and that thought upon His Name. "And They shall be Mine, Saith The LORD of Hosts, in That Day, when I Make up My Jewels: and I will Spare them, as a Man spareth his own Son, that serveth him. Then shall ye return, and discern between the Righteous and the Wicked; between him, that serveth GOD, and him, that serveth Him not."*—Mal. iii, 16 to 18. *"For, behold, the Day Cometh, That shall Burn as an oven; and all the Proud, yea, and All, that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the Day,*

*That Cometh, shall Burn them up, Saith The LORD of Hosts, that It shall Leave them neither root nor branch! But unto you, that fear My Name, shall The SUN of RIGHTEOUSNESS Arise with Healing in His Wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as Calves of the stall.*”—Mal. iv, 1, 2.

Thus, independently of the conclusion to be naturally drawn from the inequality of Man's condition in this life, that there is another Life to come, the whole Volume of Holy Writ, in its every Page, Proclaiming A Righteous and Merciful GOD, The PROTECTOR of All, that in reverence come unto Him, and The PUNISHER of All, that do evil continually; the foregoing Selections may afford to a Mind, not blinded by pride or prejudice, substantial reason for believing that, if the Sadducees had, dispassionately and with a sincere desire to arrive at the Truth, read the Scriptures, they would not have doubted either of a Resurrection or of the existence of Spirits; neither would they atheistically have denied the Power of The CREATOR of All Things to Re-create at His Pleasure, nor have called in question the Exercise of DIVINE Justice by Calling All, after Death, into Judgment.

In Heaven all carnal affections and dispositions, even such as are sanctioned both by human and DIVINE Laws cease; but they give way only to more pure and permanent Delight, yea, of a nature so Exalted, that our conceptions of it, even when they come nearest to Spiritual Perfection and Purity, fall incalculably short of the reality, for as, saith St. John, *Now are we the Sons of GOD; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall Appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is: and every Man, that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as He is Pure.*—1 John iii, 2, 3.

The expression of astonishment throughout the Multitude, that were Hearers of These Sayings of our Blessed SAVIOUR, amongst whom it may be supposed the Majority were, previously, almost, if not altogether, ignorant of Spiritual Things, is quite natural; for Many of them, perhaps, had never before thought of an Hereafter; and Most of the Few, that might have turned their thoughts towards it, had, perhaps, never regarded it in so pure and Heavenly a Light. With us, to whom Life and Immortality have been Brought to a Meridian Light by the Gospel of JESUS CHRIST, the thought of a Life to Come, which shall know no end, and of a Happiness coeval with it, which will surpass the highest reach of our present most Spiritualized conception, and which is freely Offered to us through His Incarnate Sacrifice and Mediation, should be continually impressed upon our minds, and influence us, by the supplicated Aid of The HOLY SPIRIT, so to use the Great Opportunity, thus Graciously Afforded us, of working out our Salvation in the Life that is, with the spirit of a true and lively faith, that we may meet its termination with an humble but just confidence in the Mercies of GOD, for the Sake of His SON; and may enter upon the Next with the Assurance from His HOLY SPIRIT of a Fellowship and Communion with the Saints in Light Eternal, in whose Society we shall experience a Joy, that the fondest and most endearing Relationships on Earth are utterly incapable of yielding. [See observations on Chapter vii, 8.]

But when the Pharisees had heard that He (JESUS) had Put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together. Then One of them, which was a Lawyer, asked Him a question, tempting Him, and saying, "Master, which is the great Commandment in the Law?" JESUS Said unto him, "Thou shalt love The LORD, thy GOD, with all thy heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy mind! This is the First and Great Commandment. And the Second is like unto It, Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thyself. On these Two Commandments Hang all the Law and the Prophets."—34 to 40.

How full of evil is the heart of Man, when resting on its own imagined suf-



ficiency ; and setting at nought the Proffered Guidance of The HOLY SPIRIT ! The Sadducees erred through inattention to the Whole Word of GOD, and setting up their own opinion without having properly weighed it in the Scales of Eternal Truth, or having duly compared Scripture with Scripture. But the Pharisees were the willing Victims of pride and self-assuming and self-approving righteousness : they esteemed themselves as faithful Servants of The MOST HIGH GOD, because they observed the outward ceremonies of Religion ; and, being inflated with an imagined superiority over Others, opposed a rancorous and unbending hostility to the Self-abasing Doctrines and Example of CHRIST, Which were so Calculated to Awaken an attention to the real state of the heart, and the utter helplessness and inability of Man to commend himself to A Pure and Holy GOD without DIVINE Assistance, as Offered through CHRIST and Communicated through The HOLY SPIRIT. Hence only is it that the whole Life and Soul of Man are led to the attainment of purity, humility, and entire devotedness to the Will of GOD ; which an observance of the outward forms of Religion was meant merely to shadow forth. So great was the animosity, on the contrary, of the Pharisees against The Meek and Holy JESUS, that, contemptuously as they, in general, held the Sadducees in their opinion, they condescended to wait the result of the Sadducean mission, probably in the hope that by them The SON of Man might be Confounded ; they, themselves, being regardless of what opposition He met with, so as He were but opposed with effect. And even when by His Answer, CHRIST completely Silenced the Sadducees, and Thereby Confirmed the justness of a leading tenet in the Pharisaic faith, a belief in a Life to Come, yet so far from rejoicing in that tenet being so triumphantly and unanswerably Established by such Powerful Reasoning, they gathered themselves again together in proud and malignant conspiracy still further to beset Him with difficulties, and sought to overwhelm Him by questions, dictated by the most cunning artifice, and actuated equally by hatred as by jealousy of His Growing Influence among the People.

St. Mark gives the account less circumstantially in its introduction ; or rather, as though the conference had been confined to the Sadducees : and that, out of such conference, which the Pharisees had witnessed or heard of, than from any concerted scheme amongst the latter, the question to our SAVIOUR, as to the greatest Commandment, was started by a Pharisee. His narrative is thus : *And One of the Scribes came, and having heard them (JESUS and the Sadducees) reasoning together, and perceiving that He had Answered them well, asked Him, "Which is the first Commandment of all?" And JESUS Answered Him, "The First of All the Commandments is, "Hear, O Israel ! THE LORD, our GOD, is ONE LORD : and thou shalt love The LORD, thy GOD, with all thy heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength : This is the First Commandment. And the Second is like, namely this, 'Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thyself.' There is none other Commandment greater than These."* To this narrative by St. Mark, the following addition is made, of which Neither of the other Gospel Historians has any record : *And the Scribe said unto JESUS, "Well Master, thou hast said the Truth ; for there is ONE GOD ; and there is none Other but HE ; and to love Him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the Soul, and with all the strength : and to love his Neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices."* *And when JESUS Saw that he answered discreetly, He Said unto him, "Thou art not far from The KINGDOM of GOD."*—Mark xii, 28 to 34.

This incident gives an heightened interest to the subject, and is entirely in confirmation of the leading point insisted on by St. Matthew ; nor does it positively oppose his position, that the Pharisees concerted together on the occasion ;

though there is, certainly, a seeming variance in the disposition of the Person from whom the question proceeded; St. Matthew leading us to suppose, that he was a Pharisee in the worst sense of that designation; and St. Mark exhibiting him as a discreet Man, and as having the blessed hope of an Eternal Inheritance in Heaven Held out to him by The KING of Heaven Himself.

St. Luke gives a still further turn to the same Subject, by classing with it the beautiful and affecting Parable of the good Samaritan. He agrees with St. Matthew in attributing a bad motive to the Scribe or Lawyer, who questioned our SAVIOUR on the occasion. The following is the History given by that Evangelist: *And, behold, a certain Lawyer stood up and tempted Him, saying, "Master, what shall I do to inherit Eternal Life?" HE Said unto him, "What is Written in the Law? How readeest thou?" And he answering, said, "Thou shalt love The LORD, thy GOD, with all thy heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind: and thy Neighbour as thyself." And JESUS Said unto him, "Thou hast answered right: this do! and thou shalt live." But he, willing to justify himself, said unto JESUS, "And who is my Neighbour?" And JESUS Answering, Said, "A certain Man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among Thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed; leaving him half dead: and by chance there came down a certain Priest that way; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side: and likewise a Levite, when he was at the Place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side: but a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an Inn, and took care of him; and on the morrow, when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the Host, and said unto him, 'Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee!' Which now of these Three, thinkest thou, was Neighbour unto him, that fell among the Thieves?" And he said, "He that showed mercy on him." Then Said JESUS unto him, "Go, and do thou likewise!"—Chap. x, 25 to 37.*

It seems extraordinary that such a question should be put by any One, priding himself upon his ingenuity, since the answer was so obvious; for the very first in position and, consequently, in comparative importance amongst the Commandments Promulgated in the Law is, "*I Am The LORD thy GOD; thou shalt have none other Gods but Me!*" and the three succeeding Ones are Mandates to reverence and obey Him. But it shews how weak is the wisdom of this World, and how perverted the understanding, when not brought into subjection to the Will and Word of GOD. The answer to the question, as related by St. Mark, is precisely in the language used in Deut. vi, 4, 5, and which, in effect, is recapitulated in Chapter x, 12, 13. 16 to 19: *And now Israel! What doth The LORD, thy GOD, Require of thee, but to fear The LORD, thy GOD; to walk in all His Ways, and to love Him, and to serve The LORD, thy GOD, with all thy heart, and with all thy Soul; to keep the Commandments of The LORD, and His Statutes? Circumcise, therefore, the foreskin of your heart; and be no more stiff-necked! For The LORD, your GOD, is GOD of Gods, and LORD of Lords, A Great GOD, A Mighty and A Terrible, Which Regardeth not Persons, nor Taketh reward. HE doth Execute the Judgment of the Fatherless and Widow; and Loveth the Stranger in Giving him food and raiment. And then follows a Command very similar to that insisted on by our SAVIOUR, "*Love ye, therefore, the Stranger!*"*

The duty of an entire devotion of the heart of Man, thereby meaning all his powers of body and mind, his motives as well as actions, to the Honour and Service of GOD, (Who Created us, and Freely Gave us all things; on Whose

Providence we are dependant for every Good, that can befall us, and on Whose Mercies for Those Great Mysteries of DIVINE Love towards us in the Instances of the Gifts of an Immortal Spirit, of the Means of Pardon and Reconciliation through the Intercessory Incarnation and Sufferings and Death of CHRIST, The SON of GOD, and of the Imparted Grace of The HOLY GHOST to Purify and Sanctify our Souls and Render them to be meet Partakers of the Holiness and Happiness of Heaven,) is so obvious, that None venture to deny its primary and perpetual obligation. And well, indeed, would it be for All and every One of us, if All and Each of us equally observed it in practice: for short is the utmost limit of existence here, and precarious its continuance, in every instant liable to a termination amidst the manifold accidents of Life in its present state. To us, therefore, who believe in an endless Life to Come, and that our State therein must depend on the use or abuse of the Religious Advantages we have here Graciously experienced, it cannot but seem, on mature and sober reflection, essential, in the highest degree, that we should so shape our conduct and conversation, as responsible Beings to Him, Who Knoweth our hearts, and will Finally and Justly Judge them: Lest in that Awful Day of Final Retribution He Disown us for His Servants, and Leave us in that unutterable State of misery and horror, to which the Total Withdrawing of His HOLY SPIRIT from our Souls must necessarily expose us. Let us, therefore, in heart and in Soul, with gratitude and reverential love, honour, in our Lives and conversation, The GOD, Who is Supreme over All, and JESUS CHRIST, The SON of His Love, our ADVOCATE and REDEEMER; that we may eternally be Blessed with a Portion of That FATHER, SON, and HOLY SPIRIT'S Love, Which Embraces in Its Communication every Good and Perfect Gift, infinitely Surpassing our utmost possible merits, and Exceeding in an almost equal proportion our most exalted conception of It.

△ The Second Commandment, "*to love our Neighbours as ourselves,*" is rightly Said, "*to be like unto the First:* for since GOD is Love, they, that truly love Him, cannot but delight in imitating His Ways. And, as Those are the Ways of Benevolence and Mercy, the desire of the Soul, earnestly dedicated to Him, would be collaterally and inseparably directed to the furtherance of the essential good of all GOD'S Creatures within the range of its influence and the compass of its power: and most especially of All Called to the same Glorious Inheritance of Heavenly Joys as Immortal Beings; and that, on every opportunity, by administering to their temporal wants, by comforting them under affliction, visiting them in their distresses, assisting them under their infirmities, instructing them under their ignorance; but more especially in striving to contribute towards their Spiritual improvement, both by precept and example; recollecting the encouraging Assurance of The DIVINE Promise, "*That They, who turn Many to Righteousness, shall shine as the Stars of Heaven.*" The very Words of this Second Commandment will be found in the third Book of the Pentateuch, Lev. xix, 18, and some observations on it under Chapter, xix, 19, of St. Matthew. St. Paul, after admonishing to the exercise of various branches of Social duties, and especially to the loving One Another in the spirit of Brotherly love, proclaiming that *he, who so loveth Another, hath fulfilled the Law*, sums up the whole by declaring that *if there be any other Commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this Saying, namely, "Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thyself!"* and which acceptable disposition he thus illustrates: *Love worketh no ill to his Neighbour;* repeating the assurance that *Love is the fulfilling of the Law.*—Rom. xiii, 8 to 10. Again, in his Epistle to the Galatians, the same Apostle teacheth us *to love one Another, and to walk in the SPIRIT*; of Which he describes *Love* as amongst the first Fruits [Gal. v, 13. 16. 22.] The Apostle St. James speaks of this Same

commandment in the most emphatic terms, saying, *If ye fulfil the Royal Law ording to the Scripture, [Lev. xix, 18.] "Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thyself," ye do well:* and then most forcibly exemplifies the unprofitableness of a law, that worketh not by love, in these words: *If a Brother or Sister be naked and destitute of daily food, and One of you say unto them, "Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled!" notwithstanding ye gave them not those things, which are edifying, what doth it profit?*—Chap. ii, 8. 14 to 16.

The extensiveness and universal application of these Rules of behaviour, joining love to GOD and to our Neighbours, and such a love, as necessarily implies its sincerity by unremitting and heart-prompted service, is a Further stance of the Wisdom, as well as Goodness, of our HEAVENLY FATHER; since to all capacities such Rules must be intelligible, if there be but an honest desire to understand their nature and tendency; and the observance of them essentially and necessarily begets, within our own minds and feelings, a rich recompense in the inward peace that flows from its consciousness. Whilst the neglect of them, by the abuse of the good things we receive from GOD, is, on the other hand, utterly inconsistent with a perfect love towards Him: for as St. Paul, in his admonitions to his Disciple Timothy, saith, *Now the End of the commandment is Charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:* [1 Tim. i, 5.] and purity of heart and a good conscience cannot consist with unreasonable Self-gratification and indulgence. [See observations on chapter vii, 12.]

The differences in the Evangelists' narratives may, possibly, have arisen from the same natural question having been put at different times by different individuals amongst the Scribes and Pharisees. One of them, of more candour than the Others, as instanced in St. Mark's account.

While the Pharisees were gathered together, JESUS Asked them, Saying, "What think ye of CHRIST? Whose SON is He?" They say unto Him, "The Son of David." HE Saith unto them, "How then doth David in Spirit call Him 'LORD!' saying, 'THE LORD Said unto my LORD, 'Sit Thou on My Right Hand, till I Make Thine Enemies Thy Footstool!' If David, then, call Him 'LORD,' how is He his Son?" And no Man was able to answer Him a word; neither durst any Man, from that day forth, ask Him any more questions.—41 to 46. △

By their ready answer to the Question first Put by our SAVIOUR, as well as from the whole chain of Gospel History, connected with the Pharisees, it seems they knew well the Letter of Scripture, and, indeed, prided themselves upon such knowledge; but that the corruption of their own hearts, and the darkness with which their pride clouded their understandings, led them to put a false and carnally-minded interpretation upon It. Against a similar evil befalling us, let us zealously watch and pray; for, if the same causes exist in us, the same effects must follow; and if, from the yielding to prejudice and false principle, we know not CHRIST, as we ought to know Him, He will not Know us, so as to Countenance us, when at His Second Coming in Triumphant MAJESTY, He Judge the Quick and the Dead, He will Disclaim all Saving-Knowledge of them, who withdraw from Him and His Gracious Invitation, however outwardly they may have professed themselves to have been His Disciples, or to have been faithful Worshipers and Servants of The True and Most HIGH GOD; and when He will Separate them for Ever from His Favour! a consideration how truly awful and alarming! To regard, as did these Pharisees, The CHRIST, Who then Appeared before them, as a mere Man, was to deny Him the Power of a Effectual MEDIATION, by taking from Him the Essential Qualities of An atoning SACRIFICE for the sins of the whole World, and an Effectual Inter-

cession for the Sanctifying SPIRIT to Fit the Souls of all Believers for the Purity and Holiness of Heaven. And to look for Another MESSIAH, as those unbelieving Jews did, is to deny the Truth, or pervert the meaning of almost every Page of Prophecy, in the Old Testament, at all bearing on That Vast and Vital Event. THE LORD be Magnified, and for Ever Blessed, Who hath Rescued us from such Spiritual darkness and such perverseness, and prejudice and fatal pride, and hath Caused us to know JESUS as The True MESSIAH, and to hail and cherish Him as our Great and Only REDEEMER; having Taught us so to read and mark both the Prophecies and Promises in the Old Testament, as to be convinced of their Fulfilment and Accomplishment in Him; Enlightening us by the Grace of His HOLY SPIRIT, and thereby Fitting and Preparing us, we humbly but earnestly hope, to join at the general Resurrection, with the Spirit of the sweet Psalmist of Israel in hailing the Everlasting Glories of The SPIRITUAL DAVID, and see all His Enemies made His Footstool.

The description given of this by St. Mark is as follows: *And JESUS Answered, and Said, while He Taught in the Temple, "How say the Scribes, that CHRIST is the Son of David? For David himself said by The HOLY GHOST, 'The LORD Said to my LORD, Sit Thou on My Right Hand, till I Make Thine Enemies Thy Footstool!'" [Ps. cx, 1.] David, therefore, himself calleth Him 'LORD;' and whence is He then his Son?" And the Common People heard Him gladly.*—Chap. xii, 35 to 37.

St. Luke's narrative is thus: *And JESUS Said unto them, "How say they, that 'CHRIST is David's Son?' And David himself saith, in the Book of Psalms, 'THE LORD Said unto my LORD, 'Sit Thou on My Right Hand, till I Make Thine Enemies Thy Footstool!' David, therefore, calleth Him 'LORD;' How is He then his Son?"*—Chap. xx, 41 to 44.

The variance between the two latter Evangelists and St. Matthew, whether the Pharisees answered, "The Son of David," or whether CHRIST Rendered it unnecessary by the Mode of Putting His first Question, so as to include the substance of that Answer, is not unusual, where Historians, intent on the main object, wish to arrive quickly at it; neither is it material, though the probability is, that, from the minuteness, the accuracy of the narrative, in this respect, rests with St. Matthew. The allusion to The HOLY SPIRIT, by the two first Evangelists, may be considered as implied by St. Luke's reference to the Book of Psalms, since he obviously understood This as a Prophecy: and all Prophecy is necessarily of the Gift of GOD, as The SPIRIT Giveth Utterance.

The wise Son of Sirach expresses, in similar language with the holy Psalmist, the same belief in The SON of GOD; saying, *I called upon The LORD, The FATHER of my LORD.*—Ecclesiasticus li, 10.

The same Passage in the Psalms is adduced by St. Peter in defence of himself and his Colleagues in the Apostleship, when, full of The HOLY GHOST, then Come upon them, and Shewing forth Its Fruits in their devotedness to JESUS, as The MESSIAH, they were accused of being under the influence of wine: *Ye Men of Israel, (said he,) hear these words! JESUS of Nazareth, a Man Approved of GOD, among you by Miracles and Wonders and Signs, Which GOD Did by Him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know; Him, being Delivered by the Determinate Council and Foreknowledge of GOD, ye have taken, and, by wicked hands have crucified and slain, Whom GOD hath Raised up, having Loosed the pains of Death; because it was not possible that He should be holden of it: For David speaketh concerning Him, [Ps. xvi, 8.] "I foresaw The LORD always before My Face; for He is on My Right Hand, that I should not be Moved: therefore did My Heart Rejoice, and My Tongue was Glad; moreover also My Flesh shall Rest in Hope; because Thou wilt not Leave Thy HOLY*

ONE to See corruption: Thou hast Made Known to Me the Ways of Life: Thou shalt Make Me Full of Joy with Thy Countenance!" Men and Brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the Patriarch David; that he is both dead and buried; and his sepulchre is with us unto this day; therefore, being a Prophet, and knowing that GOD had Sworn with an Oath to him, "That of the Fruit of his loins, according to the Flesh, He would Raise up CHRIST to Sit on his Throne," [Ps. cxxxii, 11] he, seeing This before, spake of the Resurrection of CHRIST, "That His Soul was not Left in Hell; neither His Flesh did See corruption." This JESUS hath GOD Raised up; Whereof we All are witnesses: Therefore, being by The Right Hand of GOD Exalted, and having Received of The FATHER the Promise of The HOLY GHOST, He hath Shed forth This, Which ye now see and hear: for David is not ascended into the Heavens: but he saith himself, "THE LORD Said unto my LORD, 'Sit Thou on My Right Hand, until I Make Thy Foes Thy Footstool!'" Therefore let all the House of Israel know assuredly, that GOD hath Made That Same JESUS, Whom ye have Crucified, both LORD and CHRIST.—Acts ii, 22 to 36.

St. Paul also, when insisting on the Resurrection of the Dead, thus proceeds: Now is CHRIST Risen from the Dead, and Become the First Fruits of them that slept: for since by Man came Death, by MAN Came also the Resurrection of the Dead: for as in Adam All die, even so in CHRIST shall All be Made Alive. But every Man in his own order; CHRIST, The First Fruits; afterward They, that are CHRIST'S at His Coming. Then cometh the End, when He shall have Delivered up The KINGDOM to GOD, even The FATHER; when He shall have Put down all Rule and all Authority and Power: (and the Apostle then emphatically adds,) For He must Reign, till He hath Put all Enemies under His Feet.—1 Cor. xv, 20 to 25. In the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Writer says, GOD, Who, at sundry times and in divers Manners, Spake in time past unto the Fathers by the Prophets, hath, in these last days, Spoken unto us by His SON; Whom He hath Appointed HEIR of All Things; by Whom also He Made the Worlds; Who, being The Brightness of His Glory, and The Express Image of His PERSON, and Upholding All Things by the Word of His Power, when He had by Himself Purged our sins, Sat down on the Right Hand of The MAJESTY On HIGH; being Made so Much Better than the Angels, as He hath by Inheritance Obtained a More Excellent Name than they: for unto which of the Angels Said He at any time? "THOU art My SON! This Day have I Begotten Thee!" and again, "I will be to Him A FATHER; and HE shall be to Me A SON!" But to which of the Angels Said He at any time? "Sit on My Right Hand, until I Make Thine Enemies Thy Footstool." Are they not All ministering Spirits, Sent forth to minister for them, who shall be Heirs of Salvation? Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the Things, Which we have heard, lest at any time we should let Them slip! For if the Word spoken by Angels was stedfast; and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of Reward, how shall we escape, if we neglect So Great Salvation? Which at the first Began to be Spoken by The LORD, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him; GOD also Bearing them Witness, both with Signs and Wonders, and with Divers Miracles and Gifts of The HOLY GHOST, according to His Own Will. For unto the Angels hath He not Put in Subjection the World to Come, Whereof we speak.—Heb. i, 1 to 5. 13, 14. ii, 1 to 5. In continuation of the same train of reasoning to establish The DIVINITY of JESUS CHRIST, as necessary to give Efficacy to His MEDIATION, and quoting in argument from the same Book of Prophecy, the Writer says, The Law, having a shadow of Good Things to Come, and not the very image of the Things, can never, with those Sacrifices, which they offered year by year continually, make the Comers thereunto Perfect; for then would

*they not have ceased to be offered? Because that the Worshippers, once purged, should have had no more conscience of sins: but in those Sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year: for it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins: wherefore when He Cometh into the World, He Saith, [Ps. xl, 6, &c.] "Sacrifice and Offering Thou Wouldest not! but a Body hast Thou Prepared Me: in Burnt Offerings and Sacrifices for sin Thou hast Had no Pleasure! Then Said I, Lo, I Come (in the Volumes of The BOOK it is Written of Me,) to Do Thy Will, O GOD!" [See also Ps. l, 8, &c.] Above when He Said, "Sacrifice and Offering and Burnt-Offerings and Offering for sin Thou Wouldest not, neither Hadst Pleasure therein; which are offered by the Law: then Said He, 'Lo, I Come to Do Thy Will, O GOD!'" HE Taketh away the First, that He may Establish the Second. By the Which Will we are Sanctified through the Offering of the Body of JESUS CHRIST Once for All. And every Priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same Sacrifices, which can never take away sins: but This MAN, after He had Offered One SACRIFICE for sins, for Ever Sat down on the Right Hand of GOD: from henceforth Expecting, till His Enemies be Made His Footstool. [Ps. cx, 1.]—Heb. x, 1 to 13.*

The effect of the Reasoning in the Text, concise as it was, yet was too forcible to be opposed, for, it seems, None attempted even to resist It: and so powerful an Impression did It make on Its Hearers, as to deter them at least from afterwards ever putting questions to Him, Who Spake as never Man spake: since, as such previous questions originated, not in an humble desire to arrive at Truth, but in an obvious disposition to put down the Doctrine of JESUS, by such discomfiture, only shame and confusion resulted to them, from whom such questions proceeded.

The three Evangelists all agree, in effect at least, as to This Answer of our SAVIOUR Occasioning such confusion to the Interrogators, as to incapacitate them for continuing their system of captious inquiry. St. Matthew and St. Mark merely placing it after the observations relative to The SON of David, and St. Luke before them; but still without any intervening question by the attendant Pharisees. As with the Pharisees, however, so is it with too many even of professing Christians: though their passions and prejudices lead them too often to such a course of life as, in spirit, calls in question the Character of their outwardly acknowledged LORD and MASTER, and militates vitally against the Efficacy of His Doctrine; and though their own consciences, if candidly appealed to, and much more The DIVINE Word of Truth, if seriously and unprejudicedly weighed, would arrest their course, and expose at once its error and its danger; yet in their consultation of those unfailing Guides, they predetermine not to disappoint themselves of their wonted indulgencies and selfish gratifications, and, therefore, either strive to forget Their Directions, or so torture the Interpretation, as to leave the Soul as destitute of Profitable and Saving Light, as did these Pharisees, who, though their reason was convinced, refused to let their hearts be converted.

△ CHAP. xxiii.—Then Spake JESUS to the Multitude, and to His Disciples, Saying, "The Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: all, therefore, whatsoever they bid ye observe, that observe and do! but do not ye after their works! for they say, and do not: for they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on Men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers: but all their works they do for to be seen of Men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments; and love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the Synagogues, and greetings in the Markets, and to be called of Men, 'Rabbi!' 'Rabbi!' But be not ye called 'Rabbi!' For ONE is your MAS-

TER, even CHRIST: and All ye are Brethren. And call no Man your Father upon the Earth! for ONE is your FATHER, Which is in Heaven. Neither be ye called Masters; for ONE is your MASTER, even CHRIST. But he, that is greatest among you, shall be your Servant: and whosoever shall exalt himself, shall be abased: and he, that shall humble himself, shall be exalted."—1 to 12.

The Blessed JESUS, having Silenced the cavillings of the Scribes and Pharisees, here Addresses Himself to the Assembly at large, including, in the Concourse, His Disciples and Chosen Followers: and as a proof that He Came not to Destroy the Law, but to Infuse a right Spirit into the observance of it, He Admonishes His Hearers to conform to the outward observance of the religious ceremonies, as enjoined by these very Scribes and Pharisees, since such was the Doctrine derived to them from Moses, and of which they were the accredited Ministers: though in their practice they were awfully remiss in following up that outward profession of Religion by a vital application of its pure and sanctifying principles to the heart and Life. From hence we justify to ourselves an attention to the Ministers of the Church, and, observing their doctrine, if according to Gospel Principles, even though their Lives may be an outrage of the very Precepts their preaching inculcates.

The Term "Scribe" in Scripture, seems to be used synonymously with "Priest:" thus, in the Book of Nehemiah, it is said, *All the People gathered themselves together, as one Man, into the Street that was before the Watertate; and they spake unto Ezra, the Scribe, to bring the Book of the Law of Moses, Which The LORD had Commanded to Israel. And Ezra, the Priest, brought the Law before the Congregation both of Men and Women, and All, that could hear with understanding, upon the first day of the seventh month: and he read therein before the Street, that was before the Watertate, from the morning until mid-day before the Men and the Women, and those that could understand: and the ears of all the People were attentive unto the Book of the Law. And Ezra, the Scribe, stood upon a Pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose; and beside him stood Mattithiah and Shema and Ananiah and Urijah and Hilkiah and Maaseiah, on his right hand; and on his left hand, Pedaiah and Mishael and Malchiah and Hashum and Hashbadana, Zechariah, and Meshullam: and Ezra opened the Book in the sight of all the People, (for he was above all the People,) and, when he opened it, all the People stood up; and Ezra blessed The LORD, The Great GOD. And all the People answered, "Amen!" "Amen!" with lifting up their hands: and they bowed their heads, and worshipped The LORD with their faces to the ground. Also Jeshua and Bani and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites, caused the People to understand the Law: and the People stood in their Place. So they read in the Book in the Law of GOD distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.*—Neh. viii, 1 to 8. Which reference not only shews that to the Scribes, who were invariably selected from the Levites, peculiarly belonged the reading and expounding of the Mosaic Law and the rest of Holy Writ; but it serves to shew in what manner Ministers should read, by distinctly commenting upon Them; and also with what devout attention so Sacred a Communication should be received by their Congregations: for, as saith the Prophet Malachi, *The Priest's lips should keep knowledge, and the People should seek the Law at his mouth; for he is the Messenger of The LORD of Hosts.*—Mal. ii, 7.

The Pharisees were also Priests, but distinguishing themselves by the peculiar tenet of adhering to the oral traditions, which they asserted to have been derived from Moses and the Elders; and which they insisted on as explanatory of, if not as absolutely controuling, the Written Law.

The other two Evangelists, St. Mark and St. Luke, do not notice this Part 



of our SAVIOUR'S Discourse, but confine themselves to the subsequent caution against adopting the practices of the Scribes and Pharisees.

St. Mark thus: *And JESUS Said unto them in His Doctrine, "Beware of the Scribes, which love to go in long clothing, and love salutations in the Market-places, and the chief seats in the Synagogues, and the uppermost rooms at feasts: which devour Widows' houses; and for a pretence make long prayers! These shall receive greater damnation."*—Chap. xii, 38 to 40.

St. Luke thus: *Then in the audience of all the People, JESUS Said unto His Disciples, "Beware of the Scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the Markets, and the highest seats in the Synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts; which devour Widow's houses; and for a shew make long prayers! The Same shall receive greater damnation."*—Chap. xx, 45 to 47.

The inefficacy of outward profession, in the great work of Salvation, is not less agreeable to right reason, than it is Declared by Scripture; for as, saith St. Paul, *We are sure that the Judgment of GOD is according to Truth, Who will Render to every Man according to his deeds: to them, who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for Glory and Honour and Immortality, Eternal Life: but unto them, that are contentious, and do not obey the Truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every Soul of Man, that doeth evil; of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile: but Glory, Honour, and Peace to every Man that worketh good; to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: for there is no Respect of Persons with GOD: Rom. ii, 2. 6 to 11. and the Apostle then adds, For as Many, as have sinned without Law, shall also perish without Law: and as Many, as have sinned in the Law, shall be Judged by the Law: for not the Hearers of the Law are just before GOD; but the Doers of the Law shall be justified. Behold, thou art called a Jew; and retest in the Law, and makest thy boast of GOD, and knowest His Will; and approvest the Things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the Law; and art confident that thou thyself art a Guide of the Blind, a Light of them which are in darkness, an Instructor of the Foolish, a Teacher of Babes; which hast the form of knowledge, and of the Truth in the Law! Thou, therefore, which teachest Another, teachest thou not thyself? Thou that makest thy boast of the Law, through breaking the Law, dishonourest thou GOD? For the Name of GOD is blasphemed among the Gentiles, through you, as it is Written [Isaiah lii, 5. Eze. xxxvi, 20 to 23.] For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly: and circumcision is that of the heart; in the Spirit, and not in the letter: whose praise is not of Men, but of GOD.—Rom. ii, 12, 13. 17 to 21. 23, 24. 28, 29.*

As far as the Ministers of GOD'S Word confine themselves to Its Promulgation, they are to be heard with reverence, and their Doctrine followed with diligence; but any example they set, hostile to Its Precepts, is studiously to be shunned, and, on opportunity offering, to be gravely, but charitably, remonstrated with. What a distressing proof do such Ministers present of the desperate depravity of the Human heart! for not only have they not ignorance to shield themselves under, but in the necessary discharge of their public and daily duty, they are incessantly admonished of it, and confirm the argument against their own private conduct by their public advice of Others. And yet, in defiance of the lesson that thus continually forces itself upon their minds, in dealing out to their Charge the Terrors and Threatenings of the violated Law of GOD, they continue in the frequent, if not constant, infraction of their acknowledged obligations, to observe as well as teach It: and thus out of their own mouths are they justly condemned, when they are judged. And the Vengeance of their highly Incensed GOD, Who Knoweth the secrets of all hearts, and by Whom actions are Justly Weighed, will assuredly Overtake them: when

they may say, in the folly of their Self-deception, "*LORD, in Thy Name have we preached and prophesied, and done many wondrous things;*" yet will He Answer with the unspeakable awfulness of His Frowning Countenance, "*I never Knew ye; Depart ye Cursed, into Everlasting Fire, Prepared for the Devil and his Angels!*" And such will be the Lot of All, who say, and do not: for All such, whether Priests or People, are Hypocrites: and *Hypocrites shall have their portion in the Burning Lake!*

The Yoke of *CHRIST* is easy, and His Burden light, but the burden imposed by the Pharisees on their Disciples and Followers, was oppressive, being an exaction of the performance of the traditionary law (which was of Men, and not of GOD,) to its utmost letter, and according to their own construction of it. And notwithstanding the earnestness with which implicit and undeviating obedience was demanded and enforced by the terrors of temporal and eternal Punishment, yet by their own Lives did these Ministers, in effect, deny the necessity of it. So in the uncharitableness of our unconverted and unrenewed hearts are we too prone to require in Others unfailing observance of rectitude; and to condemn them with severity for any the least deviation from it; though, at the same time, our own Lives would exhibit to us, if we viewed them in the light we ought, repeated instances of equal, if not more flagrant violations of GOD'S Holy Will and Commandments. And yet we are Taught to be merciful, even as our *FATHER, Which is in Heaven, is Merciful*; and to pray daily for that inestimable Blessing of *DIVINE* Forgiveness in the proportion only, that we extend our faculty of pardon and reconciliation in heart and in act to any of our offending Fellow-Creatures. Thus not the Scribes only, but the Lawyers also did our SAVIOUR Upbraid, and Denounce Vengeance against, for requiring more purity and perfection in Others, that they practised in themselves; for on One of the Lawyers addressing Him, and complaining that *CHRIST* had Reproached them, He Said, "*Woe unto you also, ye Lawyers! for ye lade Men with burdens, grievous to be borne; and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers!*"—Luke xi, 45, 46. In the same spirit of contention Some of the Pharisees, who were afterwards professed Converts to Christianity, insisted on the necessity of the Gentiles submitting to circumcision, but were thus answered by St. Peter: *Men and Brethren, ye know how that a good while ago GOD Made Choice among us, that the Gentiles, by my mouth, should hear the Word of The Gospel, and believe: and GOD, Which Knoweth the hearts, Bare them Witness, Giving them The HOLY GHOST; even as He Did unto us: and Put no difference between us and them; Purifying their hearts by Faith. Now, therefore, why tempt ye GOD, to put a yoke upon the neck of the Disciples, which neither our Fathers nor we were able to bear?*—Acts xv, 7 to 10. And to a similar effect wrote St. Paul: *As Many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the Cross of CHRIST: for neither they themselves, who are circumcised, keep the Law: but desire to have you circumcised; that they may glory in your flesh.*—Gal. vi, 12, 13.

Thus should we carefully abstain from setting up religious or moral doctrines of our own, which have not, in all respects, the Sanction of *DIVINE* Law: and when, by the Light of *DIVINE* Grace, we are enabled to point out the True and the Right Way to Others, we should as sedulously persevere ourselves in the pursuit of It, in practice, as well as in opinion.

The motives of hypocrisy in Religion are here clearly and forcibly exposed: they arise from an eagerness, not for the Praise of GOD, Which is Reserved for an Hereafter, but for that of Men, which is attended with both present pleasure and profit, though fleeting as Time, and often more perishable than Life. All such actions and habits are influenced by the desire of Popular distinction and

applause, though there be outwardly preached, *that friendship with the World is enmity with GOD*: indeed, the very dress is calculated to impose on the credulous Multitude; but though the phylacteries are broad and the robes are white, yet are the hearts full of hypocrisy and deceit, and though pointing to Others the Way to Light and Life Eternal, yet are they themselves in the broad road, that leadeth to destruction, and their Spirits are clothed in the blackness of darkness. The Name of GOD was often on the lips, but the love of Him and of His Holy Worship, in spirit and in truth, was not in the hearts. In That Day, when The SEARCHER of all Hearts shall Call All unto His Irreversible Judgment, how shall they escape from even Self-condemnation and Eternal Woe? What then will avail the Preacher having touched the hearts of his Hearers, and softened them so as to receive with readiness the Sanctifying Influence of The HOLY SPIRIT, if his own heart were, at the same time, dead to Its Gracious Impulses, and his eye closed against Its Hallowed Guidance? The same Accusation of the Pharisees for the vain glory of the World is contained in our SAVIOUR'S Sermon on the Mount, and the imitation of that example is there powerfully Cautioned against [see Chapter vi, 1, 2. 5]. The observance of the ceremonial Injunction as to dress in the Priesthood was proper; but the fault, and a fault of awful responsibility it is, lies in not decking the Soul with the ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit, and in not, by purification and prayer, seeking to have That clad in the Robes of The SON of Righteousness. The Mosaic Law bade the Children of Israel to make them fringes in the borders of their garments throughout their Generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a ribband of blue; and the object of it was declared to be, that they might look upon the fringe, and remember All the Commandments of The LORD, and do Them; and that they might not seek after their own heart and their own eyes, after which they used to go a wandering; that they might remember and do all the Commandments; and be Holy unto The LORD, their GOD.—Num. xv, 38 to 40. But Holiness unto The LORD was not the actuating motive, that led to the enlargement of these Priests' phylacteries, or to the widening of their fringes; neither had they in their hearts to do GOD'S Commandments; but, on the contrary, they blasphemed His Name by making the using of It subservient to their worldly and sensual purposes. Priests and Teachers of our day, who are such from a principle of vanity or covetousness, will, like the Pharisaic Scribes and Doctors of old, have their reward in this life: but what other than misery and overwhelming sorrow can be their portion, when the secrets of all hearts shall be open, and Truth be Made Manifest by The GOD of all Knowledge, Power, and Wisdom, and with Whom is Final Judgment: for What The LORD JEHOVAH Said to the Israelites of old, He Saith Unceasingly to All, both Jews and Gentiles, to whom His Word hath been Revealed, "*These Words, Which I Command thee this day, shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach Them diligently unto thy Children, and shalt talk of Them, when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up: and thou shalt bind Them for a sign upon thine hand, and They shall be as frontlets between thine eyes: and thou shalt write Them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.*"—Deut. vi, 6 to 9. Thus Inculcating the propriety and necessity of the Life and Actions corresponding with the professions, and of the professions according with the Will and Word of GOD. The Wisest of Mankind in a strain of Parental affection, when speaking as the Oracle of The GOD and FATHER of us all, thus has handed down to us individually his universal admonition: "*My Son, forget not My Law; but let thine heart keep My Commandments! Let not Mercy and Truth forsake thee; bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart!*" and, as a twofold Encouragement, it is added, *So shall*

*thou find Favour and Good Understanding in the Sight of GOD and Man.*—Prov iii, 1. 3, 4. And The MOST HIGH, When on Earth in The PERSON of JESUS, Gave a Similar Council, when He Said, "*Let your light shine before Men, but so shine, that Men may see your good works, and glorify your FATHER, Which is in Heaven!*"—Matt. v, 16.

Let no One shrink from the open profession of the true Faith from a spirit of base and servile fear of Man; but let None rest in profession only; but to Faith add Virtue! and still less let any One profess from a principle of deception and circumvention! for this is, indeed, making a mock of sin, which is the height of Human folly; at the recollection of which, terror and dismay will eventually arise; for Hypocrisy will then be abashed, and will be shewn forth in its true colours; and, being Judged in Righteousness, will be Branded with indelible disgrace by That GOD, to Whose Favour was preferred the vain breath of His Creatures' praises.

"*Learn of Me! (saith CHRIST,) for I am Meek and Lowly in Heart; and ye shall find rest unto your Souls.*"—Matt. xi, 29. "*I Seek not Mine Own Glory.*"—John viii, 50. And when Reasoning with them, who thirst only for the praise of Men, He Asketh, "*How can ye believe, which receive honour One of Another, and seek not the Honour That Cometh from GOD only?*"—John v, 44. To the corruption of the heart, whence deadness of Faith befalleth them that name the Name of GOD, is attributable the daring defiance of His Power, and the fearful neglect of His Proffered Salvation: let us, therefore, guard well the heart by prayer and resignation! for out of it proceed the issues of Eternal Life. In every action let us look to the motive, and be careful that it centre in GOD; in a holy fear and love of Him, and in a devotedness to His Will, and in a faithful observance of His Commandments! Let us root out from our Souls, by the supplicated Assistance of The HOLY GHOST, all desires hostile to our Everlasting Peace, and which oppose themselves as obstacles to our acquirement of *That Crown of Glory, Which fadeth not away, but Which will be Eternal in the Heavens;* and to That Honour, Which is truly imperishable, and Which neither Man nor Devil can take from us.

CHRIST thus Admonishes His Disciples, not only not to covet Worldly distinctions, but, on the contrary, rather to shun or disclaim them; Assigning as a Reason, that All are Spiritually equal, who are His Disciples indeed, He being their LORD and MASTER, Who is LORD of all Power and Might. In the same admonitory Spirit is the Address of the Apostle James: *My Brethren, be not many Masters!* [Chap. iii, 1.] recalling to the reflection, what is important for us to bear in mind, the pernicious effects of the spirit of Pride in striving with envious and unhallowed eagerness for mastery in temporal power and distinction, and so acting on a principle diametrically opposite to the Meekness and Humility Inculcated equally by the Example as by the Precept of our Great LORD and MASTER, JESUS CHRIST. St. Paul, though not behind the Chiefest of the Apostles, and pre-eminently distinguished as the Apostle of the Gentiles, amidst his holy zeal and Heavenly affection, disclaimed all superiority over His Converts; and thus, in the warmth of Brotherly love and fellowship, he addresses his Corinthian Disciples: *I call GOD for A Record upon my Soul, that to spare you I came not as yet unto Corinth:* adding, (lest he might be suspected of reserving the exercise of authority over them,) *Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are Helpers of your joy: for we preach not ourselves, but CHRIST JESUS, The LORD; and ourselves your Servants for JESUS' Sake:* [2 Cor. i, 23, 24. iv, 5.] contenting himself with the character of a mere Fellow-Labourer with them in the Great Work of Gospel Dispensation; and satisfied with the consciousness of helping Others to That Joy, which is the fruit

of a sincere faith Therein; a Joy unspeakable and full of Glory: and being himself Gifted Therewith, and experiencing Its blessed and blessing fruits, was desirous, above all things, to bring Others within the same Gracious experience, through the Love of CHRIST and the Agency of The HOLY SPIRIT. In a like disposition St. Peter admonishes the Elder Converts amongst his Correspondents, to *feed the Flock of GOD*, which was among them; *taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind: neither as being Lords over GOD'S Heritage; but being Ensamples to the Flock*: adding as an incitement, applicable to all Ages, that *when The Chief SHEPHERD shall Appear, they should receive a Crown of Glory, That Fadeth not away*.—1 Peter v, 1 to 4.


The Brotherhood and Sisterhood of Christianity is that true and perfect equality, which should prevail in the World: no One arrogating superiority; but in proportion as having had Communicated a larger share of temporal advantages, or the far more estimable Gifts of The HOLY STIRIT, striving only the more to disseminate amongst Others the seeds of essential and substantial Blessedness, and to make them Participators of that Joy themselves are filled with; and exemplifying an active gratitude for Such Proofs of DIVINE Goodness: knowing that Such Sufficiency is not of ourselves, but of GOD.

Not only was not superiority to be assumed by CHRIST'S Disciples, either amongst themselves or over Others, but that degree of servility or deference was to be avoided which might give to Others That Character, Which alone of right Belongs to The CREATOR and MASTER of the Universe: they were not to approach Any, even the most zealous and distinguished of CHRIST'S Disciples, in terms of adulation, and acknowledged dependance and homage; lest, on the one hand, they might inflate Others with pride, and, on the other hand, induce idolatry in themselves, after the example of the Roman worship of their so named demi-gods. For the past conduct of even Jews themselves, led to a reasonable expostulation, that such might be the effect of a too great respect of Persons, superseding the reverence due to GOD Himself: "*A Son honoureth his Father, and a Servant his Master; if, then, I be A FATHER, (saith The LORD,) where is Mine Honour? And if I be A MASTER, where is My Fear? O Priests, that despise My Name!*"—Mal. i, 6. Not but that the natural Relation of Parent and Child must exist: and the artificial one of Master and Servant may continue as long as the World endureth; and honour and respect and submission, in a qualified degree, should be inseparable from such connections; but they should be subordinate to the higher Honour due to Him, to Whom Alone worship should be paid.

The most Exemplary and Meritorious and deservedly Exalted in character are the least covetous of praise; and, in observance of their Gracious MASTER'S Example, practice the utmost degree of humility and fellow-kindness; aware that Christian greatness consists therein. Thus should every One, who would be The LORD'S at His Coming, bind and oblige himself to the fulfilment of all kind and neighbourly offices; serving out, in gentleness, goodness, and love unfeigned, the time allotted him here, after The PATTERN of All Excellence, in seeking and promoting the good of Others, and more especially the good of their Immortal Souls, by administering faithfully and effectually to their Spiritual wants, by healing their Spiritual infirmities, by consoling them under Spiritual afflictions, and by shedding abroad in their hearts the Glorious Light of The Gospel, through the supplicated Agency of The HOLY SPIRIT, Communicated to Mankind in the Confluence of DIVINE Mercy, as the First Fruits of CHRIST'S Mediation. This is the Brotherly love and charity, which render eminent and exemplary the Christian Professor, and are calculated to secure for

him in the Life to Come, a Crown of Glory amongst the Angels of Light, and a Fellowship in the Communion of Saints, amidst the Interminable and Ineffable Glories of The GODHEAD. See the observations on Chapter xx, 27 to 29.

*The wisdom of this World* is justly described as *foolishness with GOD*: for pride disappoints its own purposes, and instead of elevating a Man to the highest pitch of greatness, sinks him lower than the beasts that perish. The true duty of Man to his MAKER consists in conscious Self-demerit; in becoming sorrow for all of thought and word and deed, that has unfitted us for the All-penetrating Mind of A Pure and Holy GOD; in an earnest and persevering endeavour after amendment; in a full and sole reliance on the Merits and Mediation of CHRIST to Procure for us Pardon and Reconciliation from our offended CREATOR; and in continued prayer for the Influence of The HOLY SPIRIT, to Work in us both to will and to do that which may be Sanctified unto Acceptance with our HEAVENLY FATHER. And with this, pride, which was not made for Man, a frail and dependant Being, and who owes life and health and all things he hath to the Goodness and Providence of GOD, is utterly inconsistent. And whoever thinks and acts otherwise, however haughty in his looks and lofty in his eyes, being puffed up with imagined importance and superiority over his Fellow-Mortals, will find, in the Life to Come, to his utter confusion and dismay, himself shorn at once of all his imagined greatness, an Outcast from all the Magnificence and Joys of Heaven, and sunk amongst the Lowest of the Low in discomfiture, Self-condemnation, and irretrievable misery and woe; the Object, perhaps, of pity, but certainly of unavailing pity in Those, over whom he lorded it in the unbridled sway of tyrannical power, or in all the arrogance of assumed intellectual superiority. When, on the other hand, the Meek and Lowly of heart will be received with Celestial acclamations to the unfailing Glories of their SAVIOUR'S Triumph; That KING of Kings and LORD of Lords, with Whom dwell Righteousness and Peace and Holy Joy unmeasured and without end; to Whom and to the Bosom of their HEAVENLY FATHER, they will be fondly Welcomed. Let us, therefore, keep ourselves uniformly low in our own eyes, that we may be Exalted in Those of our Gracious GOD, with Whom Alone are all Power, Might, Majesty, and Dominion for Ever and Ever! The holy Job, who so well knew how to be abased and how to abound, has taught, both by example and precept, that *When Men are cast down, then is there lifting up; for The LORD of Hosts shall Save the Humble*.—Chap. xxii, 29. And that *Before honour is humility*, was a saying of the Wisest of Mankind, as well as One of the Mightiest of Monarchs [Prov. xv, 33]. And by the same Gifted Oracle was it declared that *A Man's pride shall bring him low; but that Honour shall uphold the Humble in Spirit*.—Prov. xxix, 23.

In the Gospel according to Saint Luke, this same Precept of our SAVIOUR  is Prefaced by the following impressive and admonitory *Parable*, and which arose from His Marking how certain Visitors chose out the chief rooms in the house of One of the Chief of the Pharisees, where they went to eat bread on a Sabbath day: "*When thou art bidden (Said He to them,) of any Man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room! lest a more honourable Man than thou be bidden of him: and he, that bade thee and him, come and say to thee, 'Give this Man place!'* and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room: but when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room! that when he, that bade thee, cometh, he may say unto thee, '*Friend, go up higher!*' Then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them, that sit at meat with thee: for Whosoever exalteth himself, shall be abased: and he, that humbleth himself, shall be exalted."

—Chap. xiv, 1. 7 to 11. The same Evangelist relates our SAVIOUR'S forcible Illustration of the principle of Humility, when directed where

it is infinitely more due, to The GOD and FATHER of us all: *JESUS Spake this Parable unto Certain, which trusted in themselves, that they were righteous, and despised Others: "Two Men went up into the Temple to pray; the One a Pharisee, and the Other a Publican: the Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'GOD, I thank Thee, that I am not as other Men are, Extortioners, unjust, Adulterers, or even as this Publican: I fast twice in the week; I give tithes of all that I possess.' And the Publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto Heaven; but smote upon his breast, saying, 'GOD, Be Merciful to me, a Sinner.' I Tell you, this Man went down to his house justified, rather than the Other; for every One, that exalteth himself, shall be abased; and he, that humbleth himself, shall be exalted."*—Chap. xviii, 9 to 14.

By One of the faithful Followers and Servants of This Great TEACHER and MASTER of Righteousness, it is declared, that *GOD Resisteth the Proud; but Giveth Grace unto the Humble.* And in the spirit of affectionate admonition to his Correspondents, the Apostle adds, *Humble yourselves in the Sight of The LORD! and He shall Lift you up.*—James iv, 6. 10. In similar terms of Parental and truly Christian exhortation does St. Peter thus offer his Apostolic advice: *All of you be subject One to Another; and be clothed with humility! for GOD Resisteth the Proud, and Giveth Grace to the Humble: humble yourselves, therefore, under the Mighty Hand of GOD, that He may Exalt you in due time.*—1 Peter v, 5, 6.

△ "But woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites! For ye shut up The KINGDOM of HEAVEN against Men: for ye neither go in yourselves; neither suffer ye them, that are entering, to go in."—13.

How dreadful in contemplation is This Denunciation of DIVINE Wrath, Proceeding from the Mouth of Him, Who Knoweth what is in Man, and will be The JUDGE both of Quick and Dead! How infatuated is the state of that mind which, instructed deeply in the Way that alone leadeth unto Everlasting Life and unutterable Blessedness, refuses to walk therein, and withholds from Others the Light that would lead them to it. This rejection exists in a life and conversation hostile to the Principles of Christianity, notwithstanding the hollow profession of a Christian's faith, and the outward observance of the Appointed Ordinances of its Church: for this is hypocrisy; and no Hypocrite shall have place in The KINGDOM of HEAVEN. The assumption of the outward appearance of religion, without the spirit of godliness, has the evil tendency of not only involving the Soul, that adopts it, in irretrievable Banishment from the Favour of GOD, by slighting His Counsel, and making a mock of His Commandments, but puts in jeopardy the Everlasting Salvation of Others. Thus, instead of *turning Many to Righteousness*, and, as a consequence, *shining as the Stars of Heaven*, they seek, by subtlety, to allure Others from their peace, and to rob them of their Heavenly Joy. By traditionary corruptions of the Word of GOD, by perverting His Doctrine and misapplying His Precepts, they strive to seduce Others into the labyrinths of error, and to inculcate a worldly and not a Heavenward Spirit, thus precluding them from the just hope of a Heavenly Calling, and from the unspeakable consolations of a true and lively faith. If, in the Life to Come, there be degrees of Punishment, how terribly prominent will be the misery and Self-condemnation of those, who have not only themselves defied the Power and despised the Mercies of An Almighty and All-gracious CREATOR, but have been the means of producing in Others the same spirit of hostility against The DIVINE Will, and the same contempt of Its Forbearance! How awful is the responsibility of religiously hypocritical Parents or Heads of Families, when viewed in this light, and weighed in the Balance of Retributive

Justice, unpalliated by the Influence of DIVINE Mercy! *To them, that know to do good, and do it not, to them it is sin:* and sin it is of the deepest dye in them, who, knowing to do good, and especially appointed to dispense it, not only do it not, but prevent its being done by Others.

*Woe unto you, Lawyers!* Said our SAVIOUR on another occasion, as related by St. Luke, *for ye have taken away the Key of Knowledge: ye enter not in yourselves; and them, that were entering in, ye hindered.*"—Chap. xi, 52. For, as said the Prophet Malachi, *the Priests' lips should keep knowledge: and the People should seek the Law at his mouth: for he is the Messenger of The LORD of Hosts.* But as in our SAVIOUR'S Time, so was it in that of the Prophet: when in the Oracular Voice of JEHOVAH, the Priesthood of that day were thus Addressed: "*But ye are departed out of the Way! Ye have caused Many to stumble at the Law: ye have corrupted the Covenant of Levi!*" *Saith The LORD of Hosts* [Mal. ii, 7, 8].

"Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites! for ye devour Widows' houses; and for a pretence make long prayer; therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation."  
—14.

In Continuation of the Same Penetrating Exposure and Awful Denunciation of The DIVINE Chastisement of Profession without principle, The HOLY JESUS Proceeds, and Directs It Prophetically against Those, who, under the deceiving semblance of Ministerial sanctity, prey upon the unsuspecting credulity of unprotected Widows, and, through the artifices of laboured imprecations, deprive them of their substance, and leave them greatly more distressed amidst their Conjugal bereavement than before. But the triumph of Hypocrisy will be short; and eventually the Oppressor will be Visited with the Rod of Vengeance, That shall for ever Afflict his Soul. St. Mark and St. Luke introduce the same Subject somewhat differently, by stating it as the express Advice of our SAVIOUR on the occasion to those around Him, "*to beware of the Scribes, which devour Widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers!* (and in like Words, Pointing to their final Fate,) *These shall receive greater Damnation.*"—Mark xii, 38 to 40; Luke xx, 46, 47. But the Lesson is to us the same, and it equally behoves us to take heed unto It, lest we likewise perish Everlastingly. For that such flagitious conduct will long out-live the Times in which not only our SAVIOUR was, but we shall be, on Earth, we have the Prophetic assurance of One of His most zealous Adherents, St. Paul, who, in his second Epistle to Timothy, (whom, in the spirit of Christian love, he denominates *his Son in the faith,*) thus expressed himself: *This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come; for Men shall be Lovers of their own Selves, covetous, Boasters, proud, Blasphemers, disobedient to Parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false Accusers, incontinent, fierce, Despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, high-minded, Lovers of pleasures, more than Lovers of GOD: having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof! From Such turn away! for of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly Women, laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the Truth.*—Chap. iii, 1 to 7. The Same Apostle, in his Epistle to Another of his Children in the faith, after pointing out the qualities that should adorn the Bishop or Minister of the Christian Church, added, *For there are many unruly and vain Talkers and Deceivers, specially they of the Circumcision; whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake: they profess that they know GOD; but in works they deny Him; being abominable and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.*—Titus i, 10, 11, 16.



O that Men would be wise; that they would take heed unto their ways; that they would consider their latter end! for then, who would be a Hypocrite? who would oppress the Defenceless? who would mislead the Ignorant? who would pray with the lips and not strive to direct the heart also in supplication to The FOUNTAIN of Goodness and Mercy as of Justice? And who would dare to set at nought The DIVINE Counsel, and to despise The DIVINE Judgment? All would then walk as under the All-seeing Eye of The ALMIGHTY, and as under the desirable Controul of His All-Gracious Providence. The Soul, having the primary and prominent object of pleasing GOD, would be Gifted with the Illuminating and Guiding Influence of The HOLY SPIRIT, and would be Led from holy fear to reverential love, and would pray with the Spirit and with the understanding also. And so far from long and loud prayers being resorted to, that the applause of Men might be won by them, the heart's richest and warmest effusions would be in retirement, known only to GOD, or to a few Kindred Spirits in communion with it, amidst the musings of the night watches, in the closet at the sweet hour of prime, or ere resigning the body and the free exercise of the mind with it unto the necessary refreshment of sleep. And these tribute offerings of gratitude and devotedness would be made under a consciousness, that, if they are made in the fulness of faith in The SON of GOD'S Intercession for them at the Throne of Grace, they will be Permitted to flow into the hallowed Phial, wherein are Deposited by The GOD, Who Hearerth prayer, the supplications of all Saints. But, at the same time, public prayer and thanksgiving will not be neglected; nor any opportunity lost of assembling ourselves together to pour forth our reasonable service of general worship to The Common FATHER and Great MASTER of All in CHRIST JESUS; but this also from a motive pure, as the Day of Judgment may safely set forth.

Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites! for ye compass Sea and Land to make one Proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him two-fold more the Child of Hell than yourselves!"—15.

Amongst the baneful fruits of hypocrisy is the contaminating and corrupting of Others, by all manner of deceptableness; bringing them under subjection to the vicious will and oppressive power of its Votaries: for the Soul, that rejects for itself the Means of Salvation, eagerly seeks to involve Others in its fate; more especially if its temporary honours and present gratifications are thereby increased. But however terrible in the contemplation, yet is the Sentence Just, That is thus Prophetically Pronounced upon such twofold iniquity! and assuredly in Its appointed season will It be Executed. For though Man may deceive his Fellow-Mortal, yet cannot GOD be Deceived; nor will He be Mocked with impunity: None can shun His Sight, nor escape His Knowledge, nor resist His Power. And the Day will come, when the secrets of all Hearts shall be Made manifest unto All; and the Soul that hath done evil, and taught Others so, and has not deeply repented of such evil, and sought for Pardon and Reconciliation, Whence Alone They can be Obtained, through faith in the Sacrifice and Intercession of The SON of GOD, that Soul will surely die to all hope of Heaven. It cannot live in the Atmosphere of Holiness: it must taste for ever of the anguish of despair, and of the deep depressiveness of Self-condemnation. How marvellous is the folly of Mankind, who labour and toil incessantly, rising up early, and late taking rest, compassing both Sea and Land, daring Death and Destruction in all their varying shapes, that they may gather to themselves a name and an influence amongst Mortals as frail as themselves, seeking the Mammon of unrighteousness, that they may indulge the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eye, or the alluring but devouring pride of Life; though

light by every exercise of serious Reflection, would they but practise its lessons, it for all these their Souls will be Required of them.

Noe unto you, ye blind Guides, which say, 'Whosoever shall swear by the Temple, it is nothing; but Whosoever shall swear by the gold of the Temple, he is a Debtor!' Ye Fools, and Blind! for whether is greater, the gold, or the Temple that sanctifieth the gold? And, 'Whosoever shall swear by the Altar, it is nothing; but Whosoever sweareth by the gift, that is upon it, he is guilty.' Ye Fools and Blind! For whether is greater, the gift, or the Altar that sanctifieth the gift? Whoso, therefore, shall swear by the Altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon: and Whoso shall swear by the Temple, sweareth by it, and by Him That Dwelleth Therein. And he, that shall swear by Heaven, sweareth by the Throne of GOD, and by Him That Sitteth Thereon."—16 to 22.

To be blind as a Guide, when professing to lead the way from error unto righteousness and Truth, is to be wilfully and sinfully neglectful of the essentialities and High Calling to Such an Office and Character! But on Such as they, who study their own gratifications at the expense of what belongs and is due to the Honour and Worship of GOD, appropriating the offerings, intended for the promotion of true Religion and Charity, to a selfish and sensual indulgence, is due DIVINE Vengeance in Reserve! For The LORD Weigheth the Spirits of men, and Accepteth only Such as are true of heart and faithful to their holy trust; He lightly Esteeming the Proud, and Scorning the Unprincipled.

THE LORD Spake unto Moses, Saying, "*Thou shalt make an oil of holy anointment; and thou shalt anoint the Tabernacle of the Congregation therewith, and the Ark of the Testimony, and the Table and all his Vessels, and the Candlestick and his Vessels, and the Altar of Incense, and the Altar of Burnt Offering with all his Vessels, and the laver and his foot; and thou shalt sanctify them, that they may be most holy: whatsoever toucheth them shall be holy.*"—Exod. xxx, 2. 25 to 29. "*Thou shalt cleanse the Altar, when thou hast made an atonement for it; and thou shalt anoint it to sanctify it: seven days thou shalt make an atonement for the Altar, and sanctify it; and it shall be an Altar most holy: whatsoever toucheth the Altar shall be holy.*"—Exod. xxix, 36, 37.

To suppose that a perversion of the offerings of the Worshipers of GOD from Objects Agreeably to The DIVINE Will, and that would promote The DIVINE Honour, to the gain and secular profit of the Priest, would advance the state of Salvation amongst the Souls of the Offerers in any equal degree with what the paramount consideration of the Glory of GOD would tend to produce to the Soul, is unreasonable. Amidst the homage that we may outwardly pay to the service of our Church, we should remember that our Souls are properly the Temples of The HOLY GHOST, as the Receptacles of His Grace, and our hearts are the altars from which the incense of our worship should arise. Whatever pertaineth to the Service of GOD should be reverently regarded and engaged in: but let us especially be careful, in our admiration of the Sanctified creature, not to forget that our worship is exclusively due to The CREATOR.

The Christian's reverence for The Name of The DEITY prevents his using it unseasonably, and restrains him from oaths or vows, not from circumstances required of him: he takes heed unto his words even, that he offend not with his tongue: to him the binding solemnity of an oath is unnecessary, for what he promises to do or not to do, he will equally regard and conscientiously fulfil, though there be no oath or bond in the matter; he contemplates the Perfect knowledge and Continual Presence of GOD, and acts and lives as ever seen by Him, Who is Invisible, and Who Loveth the Truth. And when he does swear, he is not like the Israelites of old, as described in the Text; neither is he like so Many of the modern Israelites, who observe the pledges of their honour

sacredly as between Man and Man, and yet lightly esteem their professions of obligation to GOD.

When The LORD is Said to Dwell in the Temple, this should be understood as meaning that His Protection and Favour would be Especially Extended towards it; since from His Nature it is impossible that He should be Confined to Space: and the expression, therefore, in the Text will be construed with reference to language adapted to Human conception, which is incapable of forming a just idea of Universality or Infinity, much less of conveying it in words. At the Dedication of the Temple at Jerusalem, Solomon thus delivered his inaugural Charge: *THE LORD Said, That He would Dwell in the Thick Darkness. I have built an House for the Name of The LORD GOD of Israel, and I have set there a Place for the Ark, wherein is the Covenant of The LORD, Which He Made with our Fathers, when He Brought them out of the Land of Egypt.*—1 Kings viii, 12, 20, 21; 2 Chron. vi, 2. David had contemplated the Peculiar Presence or Influence of JEHOVAH amongst His faithful and Chosen People, and thus expressed his sense of It: *LORD, I have loved the Habitation of Thy House, and the Place, Where Thine Honour Dwelleth.*—Ps. xxvi, 8. In the 34th verse of Chapter v of St. Matthew, Heaven is Declared, by The Same DIVINE Oracle, Who Speaks in the Text, to be *The Throne of GOD.* And so said the Earthly Sire and Type of This GOD in Man: *THE LORD is in His Holy Temple; The LORD'S Throne is in Heaven.*—Ps. xi, 4. And so proclaimed the Prophet Isaiah: *Thus Saith The LORD, "The Heaven is My Throne; and the Earth is My Footstool."*—Isa. lxvi, 1. Which very Words are quoted by St. Stephen in his vindication of himself against the charge of blasphemy, Acts vii, 49. As The Spirit of Man is an Image of his MAKER, and the heart of the Perfect Man, when Regenerated and Sanctified by The SPIRIT of Grace, is an Image of Heavenly Purity and Peace and Holy Love, so from the expansive ~~nature~~ <sup>life</sup> of that Spiritualized Nature, even when fettered to the perishable matter of the Body, partaking of that joy, which is inseparably associated with it at all times and in all places, some faint idea may be formed of the Nature of The DEITY and the Heaven of Excellence and Bliss That are necessarily with Him. But the Communication of the Means of Happiness to His Creatures, Resting entirely with His Own Free Will; and It being His Declared Will that *Men should worship Him in spirit and in truth*; and He having moreover Declared that *when Two or Three are gathered together in His Name and Worship, there is He in the Midst of them*; it is to be understood, by the Temple of The LORD, not that He is Exclusively and, as it were, Humanly speaking, Personally Present there, but that His Peculiar Favour is Visited upon the consciousness of Such, as there are met in the communion of faith and supplication: the Fruits of Which Peculiar Preference will Manifest themselves in the serene and blissful Lives and pious conversations of the Chosen Servants and Subjects of their GOD and HEAVENLY KING.

△ "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites! For ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin; and have omitted the weightier matters of the Law, Judgment, Mercy, and Faith: these ought ye to have done; and not to leave the other undone. Ye blind Guides! which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel!—23, 24.

Another instance of Hypocrisy is the studied observance of secondary and, comparatively, inconsiderable matters of religious duty, and the total neglect of the primary and more essential points of obligation: thinking by such slight attention to the letter of one branch of The DIVINE Law, to impose on superficial minds the belief of peculiar sanctity and submission to The DIVINE Will, and resting satisfied with that, deceiving and often being deceived by slighting

he Excellent Spirit of GOD'S Higher Commandments; shewing, thereby, that He was not in the thought of their hearts, and that they would not suffer Him to Rule over them; but preferred the Idols of this World, pride, vanity, and ambition; in effect, false Objects of worship, not less pernicious than the false gods of the Heathen, as respects their Votaries' Salvation.

St. Luke records the same Sentiment, though in different words: "*But woe unto you Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue, and all manner of herbs; and pass over Judgment, and the Love of GOD! These ought ye to have done; and not to leave the other undone.*"—Chap. xi, 42. Not that such minor acts or offices of obedience and concession were altogether insignificant, or that we should slight similar duties; but we should not rest in them for Acceptance with GOD, but fulfil other duties as well as these with an equally hearty good will. A partial observance of a law enjoined us by Civil institutions, is insufficient to exempt us from the punishment denounced against the Violators of it, though but partially infringed. In the Courts of The LORD, Where Truth without any mixture of error Characterises the Judgment Pronounced, Man must stand or fall as his heart has been right or not with GOD. Human Institutions may fail from insufficient provision for unforeseen villany or artifice, and still more so from the inadequacy of evidence; but not so in the Dispensation and Application of His Laws by The JUDGE of all the Earth. Amidst all the folly of Mankind, no mind can be so weak as to suppose that to confine an offering or service, within the narrowest order of sacrifice, can propitiate Him, to Whom we owe our life and All that sustains it, and imparts to it Blessing and Consolation. Hypocrisy may strive to influence in Others a belief, that where the lighter matters of the ceremonial Law are punctiliously observed, this is a sufficient earnest that the weightier ones are not neglected; but if the fact be otherwise, these Deceivers verily have their reward upon Earth in the success of their fraud: but for these things will not The LORD Visit? For, as said the Prophet Samuel, *Hath The LORD as Great Delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the Voice of The LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice; and to hearken than the fat of rams!*—1 Sam. xv, 22. And the Wisest of Men, who was DIVINELY Inspired with Wisdom, hath left us this salutary Admonition: *Keep thy foot, when thou goest to the House of GOD; and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of Fools! for they consider not that they do evil!*—Eccles. v, 1. To let the Body attend at the appointed Places of Public Worship, without joining with the spirit and with the understanding in the Service, what profit can there be, in reference to Everlasting Interests, when the Soul is Called to its great Account before The SEARCHER of all hearts? *The hope of the Hypocrite, if hope he had, will then perish.*—Job viii, 13. By His Prophet Hosea, The MOST HIGH Speaks to All Such, under the characters of Bygone Professors without the essential attendant of principle: "*O Ephraim! What shall I Do unto thee? O Judah! What shall I Do unto thee? For your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away! I Desired Mercy, and not sacrifice; and the Knowledge of GOD, more than burnt offerings.*"—Hos. vi, 4. 6. Thus Manifesting that the outward ceremonies of Religion, however they may impose on the credulity of Man, cannot deceive The OMNISCIENT; neither will they be Accepted as the All, that is Required of us by Him. The Prophet Micah corroborates what is the Sacrifice, which is Well Pleasing in the Sight of GOD, saying, *Wherewith shall I come before The LORD, and bow myself before The HIGH GOD? shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will The LORD be Pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my First-Born for my transgression; the fruit of my Body for the sin of my Soul? HE hath Shewed thee, O Man, What*

is Good: and, *What doth The LORD Require of thee, but to do justly, and to love Mercy; and to walk humbly with thy GOD?*—Micah vi, 6 to 8. See the observations on these two last cited passages in the thoughts on verse 13 of chapter ix, which expressly refers to them: see also those on verse 7 of chapter xii. The great duties thus inculcated by the Text, and which alike affect Jew and Gentile, are judgment or righteousness in our conduct towards our Neighbours and ourselves; mercy in our treatment of Others, whether rational or irrational Creatures; and faith in the Being, the Attributes, the Providence, the Promises of GOD, and in Those Stupendous Works of DIVINE Love and Compassion, the Creation of us as Intellectual Beings and Immortal Spirits; the Redemption of us by the Incarnation and Sufferings of JESUS, The MESSIAH, The SON of GOD and Man, from the Sentence of Everlasting Banishment from the Favour of The LORD and the Glory of His Power; and the Reconciling of GOD to us by the Sanctifying Influence of The HOLY SPIRIT, Communicated to us as the First Fruits of our SAVIOUR'S Offerings. To neglect These, and to rely upon the observance of the mere external rites of the Church, as sufficient to entitle us to the inconceivable and inestimable Privilege and Blessing of Life and Peace and Joy Eternal in the Visual Presence of All The Glories of The GOD-HEAD, is, indeed, to be most perversely blind to our only true interests; and, by hypocrisy, to endeavour to teach Others so. It is the arrogance of pride to set up Man's opinion against the Express Command of his MAKER; it is to disregard the Light That breaketh sweetly upon the eye of Faith, and to let loose the corrupt desires that revel in the Satanly governed heart, which prompts to the shrinking from That Pure and Heaven-born Lustre of The SPIRIT of Grace: it is to read the Word of Life, and then to turn away from It, and disregard Its Counsel: it is to prefer darkness to light: it is to set at nought the dictates of our consciences, and to leave undone the only Thing, Which it is equally our interest as our duty to do. But let us not so learn CHRIST; nor so interpret or misapply the Wisdom from Above: on the contrary, let us seek earnestly to become truly acquainted with The DIVINE Will; and, having studied It with a right spirit, may we lay It to heart, and strive in all things to do It: receiving comfort and support from the assurance, that happy shall we be, if, knowing These Things That Belong to our Everlasting Peace, we do Them.

△ “Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites! For ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter; but within they are full of extortion and excess! Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that, which is within the cup and the platter, that the outside of them may be clean also! Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites! For ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward; but are within full of dead Men's bones, and of all uncleanness! Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto Men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.”—25 to 28.

An exterior polish to delude and to deceive, is despicable in the most trivial transactions between Man and Man: but a conduct which, in effect, aims at misleading in His Judgment The OMNISCIENT, is futile, and fraught, eventually, with inevitable confusion and destruction. To assume to be that, which our consciences, if consulted, would tell us we are not, nay, when in principle we are, the very opposite of our profession, and the disguise is only worn so long as it may be deemed necessary to save appearances and gain the favourable opinion of our Fellow-Creatures, may answer the end intended, by gratifying our vanity or feeding our ambition; but even in these aims we are far from being secure from disappointment. And, at all events, when this Life is ended, and the veil is drawn from all eyes before the tremendously Awful Judgment Seat of The

MOST HIGH, then will the hideous deformity, which never for a moment was, in this Life, concealed from the All-Searching Eye of GOD, be Made manifest to the perfected vision of an assembled World; and those, who, the Victims of our deception, believed us to have been righteous and holy in our day, because we worshipped GOD with our mouth, and honoured Him with our lips, will see us involved in everlasting infamy and despair, when Condemned, deservedly, to the bitter portion of Those, whose hearts were far from GOD; and who, though outwardly wearing sheep's clothing, inwardly were ravening wolves. The observance of outward cleanliness, accompanied by a total neglect of the purification of the Inner Man, the Soul or Spirit, which is his infinitely more valuable part, as being his GOD-like Nature, was one amongst many other of the errors of the Jews, that called down upon them the Denunciation of GOD'S Just Chastisement, and tended to produce their Destruction as a Nation, and will assuredly produce the Everlasting Destruction of the Individuals engaged in it.

St. Mark records of the *Pharisees and all the Jews*, that *except they wash their hands oft, they eat not; holding the tradition of the Elders: and when they come from the Market, except they wash, they eat not: and many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups and pots, brassen vessels, and of tables.*—Chap. vii, 3, 4. On this Passage, connected as it is with the Text, and with that of the eight first verses of Chapter xv, see the observations there offered.

The record given us of this by St. Luke, arises out of the invitation offered by a Pharisee to our SAVIOUR to dine with him, and the Former's expression of surprise at JESUS Setting down to dinner without first Washing His Hands: when JESUS Said, "*Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter: but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness: ye Fools, did not he, that made that which is without, make that which is within also?*"—Chap. xi, 37 to 40.

Absurd as it is to consider that vessel clean, of which the outside only has been washed, when the inside is full of filthiness; not less obviously and most awfully erroneous is it to allow the mind to be led away with an impression that outward demeanour and a decent observance of the ceremonial Law, will constitute a state of purification, such as can be Acceptable to GOD, Who is A SPIRIT and A GOD of Perfect Purity and Holiness, and has the most Just Sense of the Spirit of evil that inhabits and influences the heart. Man may so successfully practise deception on his Fellow-Man, as almost to persuade himself that he is a Christian, from knowing that he is commonly reputed such: but this is one of the Self-appropriated fruits of iniquity, and not the least baneful in its qualities.

Let us strive to wash in that Water of Life, which may cleanse our hearts from sin, and purify our hands with innocency, by manifesting a true and lively faith, and a consistent and uniform obedience to the Will of GOD, and perfecting the Christian Spirit of Brotherly love, by good will to our Fellow-Mortals!

The Church-yard is a School of Wisdom in the correction of the vanity of Man, if, in the inspection of it, the mind's eye be led beyond the decorated surface of the monumental tablets: but to suppose that all is as fair within these, as on their outside, or, what is in effect the same, to derive gratification from the superficial beauty, without directing one thought to the perishable nature of our own Earthly condition from the corrupted state of them, who, like us, had once an animated body, but are now, as we must one day be, numbered with the Dead, is wilfully to darken the understanding and shut out the mind from the most profitable instruction. But to be ourselves the very Representatives of these sepulchres, having an imposing exterior, but destitute of every principle

of Spirituality and true Religion, is voluntarily but necessarily to draw down upon us the Just Vengeance of An insulted but Almighty GOD; it is to prefer Earth to Heaven, and the things of Time to those of Eternity, nay, it is even worse, it is to reject even peace upon Earth, for there is no peace for the Wicked.

St. Luke gives a variance in the Language Used by our SAVIOUR for this description of Character open to Prophetic Denunciation: "*Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites! For ye are as graves, which appear not; and the Men, that walk over them, are not aware of them.*"—Chap. xi, 44. The application, however, is the same: the work of deception being, in either case, intended to be figured: both, perhaps, might have been Used; and the record only of That preserved by each Evangelist. Which, at the time, most won on his attention and impressed itself on his memory, whether as heard by St. Matthew immediately from our SAVIOUR'S Lips, or as reported to St. Luke by any Other of our SAVIOUR'S Auditory. Of a like simile St. Paul made use in his exclamation against *Ananias*, who, under the hypocritical assumption of a Defender of the true faith and of the Law of The MOST HIGH, gave vent to private malice and unwarrantable severity, *commanding the Apostle to be smitten on the mouth*, because he boldly asserted his innocence, and that his conscience was without offence both towards GOD and Man, when, under the smartings of so unjust an infliction, he said, *GOD shall Smite thee, thou whited wall! for sittest thou to judge me after the Law; and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the Law?*—Acts xxiii, 1 to 3. The assumption of holiness, when the heart is not only a Stranger, but an Enemy, to it, is hateful to the Sight of Man, and must be still more so to A HOLY GOD. But the Human heart, when left to itself, unregenerated, rejecting the Guidance of The HOLY SPIRIT, and neither seeking nor acknowledging the need and efficacy of The SON of GOD to Redeem the Soul from sin, and to Reconcile The FATHER to Forgiveness and Adoption, is full of all manner of deceivableness.

△ "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the Prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the Righteous, and say, 'If we had been in the days of our Fathers, we would not have been Partakers with them in the blood of the Prophets.' Wherefore ye be Witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the Children of them, which killed the Prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your Fathers! Ye serpents! ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of Hell?"—29 to 33.

Amongst the various weaknesses of Man may be classed, and, perhaps, not among the least, that tendency to judge of the conduct of Others, and to condemn it as opposed to what the Censurers would themselves have pursued; no allowance being made by them for difference of circumstances, constitution, connections, or otherwise, which Charity would suggest or hope to have existed as extenuating offences. It is but reasonable, in the estimate of Others, to weigh in the scales of merciful consideration their conduct, remembering that it is GOD Only that Looketh upon the heart, and that to Him they must stand or fall. The influence of example, whether good or bad, the greater or less degree of knowledge, or advantage of education, the peculiarity of National or Provincial habits may offer excuses or strengthen comparative judgment. Happily the full Light of Truth is upon us, and we are relieved from the danger of interweaving a false zeal with the impulse of our natural passions, if we but follow Its Gracious Guidance. Instead of being eager to criminate Others, or at least to give ourselves credit for being even under all their circumstances incapable of their excesses or absurdities, we should be thankful for being

Restrained, through the Love of our SAVIOUR, from falling into any similar course of offending against The Law of GOD. And especially let us pray that we, who properly condemn in the Jews the Crucifixion of CHRIST'S Body, do not crucify Him afresh in His SPIRIT! for agonizing as were His Bodily Sufferings, yet infinitely more Excruciating was the Anguish of His Soul from the wounds of our, as well as Other's, transgressions, and from the bruises of our, as well as Other's, iniquities. The Jews, who were Contemporaries with our SAVIOUR upon Earth, prided themselves on their almost devotional respect for the memory of their Prophets, and execrated the names of those Persons who occasioned their destruction. Yet The SON of GOD, The Incarnate DEITY, He, of Whom all the Prophets wrote, and to Whom all the truly Righteous bore testimony, was, by the same Jews persecuted unto Death, even the ignominious Death of the Cross. Whilst we exult in not having been Participants in a Guilt, partly attributable to a mistaken zeal, let us take heed, lest, when thinking we are standing most securely in our own profession of faith, we fall into practical error, and so be, in a degree, joined in their condemnation! "*FATHER, Forgive them, for they know not what they do!*" was our SAVIOUR'S Marvellous and Merciful Prayer, when Anguished by His Tormentors' inflictions. St. Peter also leads us to expect Many, who had taken part in those execrations and cruelties, did it in ignorance: and Many, who pursued unto death the Followers and Disciples of The Blessed JESUS, did it, like Paul before his conversion, in ignorance and through a misguided zeal; and thought not that they were grieving The SPIRIT of The MOST HIGH. But we have no such Plea, or ground of Excuse; for now we know, through the Tidings of The Gospel, and by the Aid of The HOLY SPIRIT, the Truth, as It is in JESUS; and, so knowing, Woe unto us if we pervert or slight It. For to pervert the Precepts of The DIVINE Will, is, as it were, to sacrifice the Prophets of The LORD; and, in so doing, we should be Witnesses unto ourselves, that we are the Children of Disobedience, resisting The HOLY GHOST.

To the same career of persecution among the Jews, St. Paul adverts in his Parentally affectionate address to the Thessalonians, from whence a similar application may be made, and profitably applied to our own hearts: *Ye are Witnesses, and GOD also, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you, that believe: as ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every One of you, as a Father doth his Children, that ye would walk worthy of GOD, Who hath Called you unto His KINGDOM and GLORY. For this cause also thank we GOD without ceasing; because when ye received the Word of GOD, Which ye heard of us, ye received It not as the word of Men; but as It is in Truth the Word of GOD, Which Effectually Worketh also in you that believe: for ye, Brethren, became Followers of the Churches of GOD, which in Judea are in CHRIST JESUS: for ye also have suffered like things of your own Countrymen; even as they have of the Jews; which both killed The LORD JESUS and their own Prophets, and have persecuted us: and they please not GOD; and are contrary to all Men; forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles, that they might be Saved; to fill up their sins alway.*—1 Thess. ii, 10 to 16. And well may it be for us, if we stifle not the energies of a lively Faith and the influencies of a holy zeal; if we check not the utterance of Christian counsel, nor the flow of Christian charity, and so quench not the Workings of The HOLY SPIRIT! And may we turn unto The LORD, in Self-condemnation and penitence, that He may have Mercy upon us, and in supplication to our GOD, that He may abundantly Pardon us! for though great may be the measure of our sins, yet Great is His Forbearance, and Deep His Mercy Spring: and, as there was a time, when *the iniquity of the Amorites was not full* [Gen. xv, 16], so may it be with us!



Stephen, in all the fortitude of the Christian Remonstrant, though at the peril of a torturing death, thus accused the Scribes and Pharisees, who had, as our SAVIOUR Foretold of them, filled up the measure of their iniquity, saying, *Ye Stiff-necked and Uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist The HOLY GHOST! As your Fathers did, so do ye! Which of the Prophets have not your Fathers persecuted? and they have slain Them, which shewed before of the Coming of The JUST ONE! Of Whom ye have been now the Betrayers and Murderers! Who have received the Law by the disposition of Angels; and have not kept It.*—Acts vii, 51 to 53.

See the remarks on Chapter iii, 7.

△ “Wherefore, behold, I Send unto you Prophets, and Wise Men, and Scribes: and Some of Them ye shall kill and crucify, and Some of Them shall ye scourge in your Synagogues, and persecute them from City to City; that upon you may come all the Righteous Blood shed upon the Earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, Son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the Temple and the Altar. Verily I Say unto you, All these things shall come upon this Generation.”—34 to 36.

How appalling to the contemplative mind is This Judgment and Vengeance-teeming Prophecy, thus Delivered from the mouth of The SON of GOD, The WORD, That was with GOD and is GOD. For to All, who have in like manner offended unrepentingly against the Spirits and Bodies of the Faithful in CHRIST JESUS, and who, in their eager condemnation of Others, have shut their eyes to their own guilt and its enormity, is This Prediction, Pregnant with so fearful a Denunciation of Everlasting Consternation, equally applicable. They had been before characterized as those reptiles of the Earth most inimical to the peace, and most obnoxious to the life of Man; creatures, who from their venom and subtlety and grovelling nature, are selected amongst all of the countless myriads of the Objects of Creation, as the fittest images of the art and malice of Satan or the Spirit of evil, by Him, Who Left the Habitations of Holiness amidst the Glories of The GODHEAD, that by Adopting our Nature, and thereto Imparting Perfect Righteousness and Purity, He might Bruise this very Serpent's head and Destroy the sting of Death, and Open to All Believers the Gates of HEAVEN. The Prediction contained in the Text was, in all respects, fulfilled; for not only was CHRIST Himself Scourged and Crucified, but His Apostles and Disciples were persecuted, and even Some of them to the death, by the same rebellious Generation of Jews; though Sent to them in the spirit of Heavenly Affection, as Messengers of Peace and not of Evil, to call them from the gates of Hell to the Way That Leadeth unto Life Eternal, by Forgiveness of sins and Sanctification by The HOLY SPIRIT, through the Atonement Offered by the Out-pouring of the Precious Blood of CHRIST.

See the observations on the Parable of the Lord of the Vineyard and the Husbandmen, Chapter xxi, 33 to 39.

St. Luke's narrative is thus: “*Woe unto you, (Scribes, Pharisees, and Lawyers,) for ye build the sepulchres of the Prophets; and your Fathers killed them! Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your Fathers: for they indeed killed them; and ye build their sepulchres: Therefore also Said the Wisdom of GOD, ‘I will Send them Prophets and Apostles; and Some of Them they shall slay and persecute; that the blood of all the Prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the World, may be Required of this Generation; from the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the Altar and the Temple: Verily I Say unto you, It shall be Required of this Generation.’*”—Chap. xi, 47 to 51.

In effect, the narrative of each Evangelist is the same, though that by St.

Matthew appears the more logical, and gives, therefore, more force to the reasoning. It was not that the sins of the Fathers were attributable to and, therefore, punishable on the Children; but the latter made themselves more iminal than their Fathers, in their persecutions and contemplated Sacrifice of eir Great Spiritual HIGH PRIEST, Who had been Himself, through The OLY SPIRIT, The Voice of all the Prophets, that ever appeared on the Earth; us attempting to disappoint the Gracious Purposes of PROVIDENCE to Man, the Great and Merciful Work of Redemption by the Prevalence of a Spiritual ingdom on Earth. And yet did these false Zealots withal affect, hypocritically, veneration for GOD'S Name, and a devotion to His Will, by erecting and autifying the monuments of those, who had been the faithful Servants of His ord; and arrogating to themselves an absence of such evil from their own arts, as existed in their Ancestors, unto such work of destruction. Yet after aying The Innocent and Salvation-Bringing JESUS, The LAMB of GOD, they ight to slay His Disciples also: and though, in one instance, stayed by the rce and authority of the sage council of Gamaliel, yet did they not forbear together venting their malice upon these *Apostles* to a limited extent; having *aten them* before they were suffered to depart, and having attempted to inflict them a punishment infinitely more agonizing to them, the suppression of their al and the subversion of their faith, in *commanding that they should not speak the Name of JESUS*.—Acts v, 40. Let us not silence our conscience, nor oak our offences under the assurance of our persecutions or severe reflections on Others, having the advancement of Virtue by the exposure and condemnation of Vice for their aim, and rely on a Pardon like what was Visited on St. aul for his unshaken zeal in his causing to be imprisoned and punished in very Synagogue, where he came, those that believed in JESUS as The MES- LAH! For the veil, which once clouded the Spiritual vision of that Dis- nguished Convert to Christianity, has not been drawn over our eyes; on the ntrary, we have been Taught, from our youth up, the great Christian Truths, *do justly, to love Mercy, and to walk humbly with our GOD: and justly we must do*, if we overrate the infirmities and transgressions of Others, and regard ith complacency our own equal, or grosser violations of Both or Either of the o Great Commandments on Which hang all the Law and the Gospel, namely, o love The LORD our GOD with all our heart, and to love our Neighbours as rselves: and assuredly do we not *love Mercy*, if we withhold it from Others, hen in our power to minister it, and forgive them not; though we daily pray, our SAVIOUR Appointed us to do, to be Forgiven, and that in the measure, which we deal out our forgiveness: neither can we *walk humbly with our GOD*, or dwell sufficiently on our own unworthiness when compared with His lolliness, if, in our intercourse with Others, we are haughty in mind and lofty i mien; and boast, even to GOD, "*that we are not as Others are*."

The Record of the death of Abel alluded to in the Text, is thus concisely iven in the first Book of the Pentateuch: *Cain*, (the first-born of Adam and ve,) *who was a Tiller of the ground, brought of the fruit of the ground an offering nto The LORD, and Abel, (his Brother,) who was a Keeper of sheep, brought so of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And The LORD had respect unto Abel and his offering: but unto Cain and to his offering He had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell: and The LORD Said nto Cain, "Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou est well, shalt thou not be Accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the or: and unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him."* And Cain lked with Abel his Brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that ain rose up against Abel, his Brother, and slew him.—Gen. iv, 2 to 8.

The blood of Such as Abel, faithful Servants of their GOD, and stedfast Observers of His Commandments, from age to age, the unnatural Jews, though their own Brethren, had murderously shed. Their Successors also, by building the tombs of the martyred Prophets, and garnishing their sepulchres from time to time, took to themselves the praise of thereby honouring GOD, though, like Cain's, the sacrifice was with Pharisaical pride, and without any particle of the Spirit of pure and submissive and sanctified devotion.

The admonitions of St. John, with reference to the test of Truth in the trial of our service or offerings being Acceptable or not to GOD, should be ever present to our minds in our judgment either upon ourselves or Others: *Let no Man deceive you! He that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous: he, that committeth sin, is of the Devil; for the Devil sinneth from the beginning. For This Purpose The SON of GOD was Manifested, that He might Destroy the works of the Devil. Whosoever is Born of GOD, doth not commit sin; for His Seed Remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is Born of GOD. In this the Children of GOD are manifest; and the Children of the Devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of GOD; neither he that loveth not his Brother. For This is the Message, That ye heard from the beginning, "That we should love One Another!" Not as Cain, who was of that wicked One, and slew his Brother: and wherefore slew he him? because his own works were evil, and his Brother's righteous.*—1 John iii, 7 to 12.

The narrative as to Zechariah, is as follows: *After the death of Jehoiada, (the Priest, in the reign of Joash, King of Judah,) the Princes of Judah made obeisance to the King; and the King hearkened unto them: and they left the House of The LORD GOD of their Fathers, and served groves and idols. And Wrath Came upon Judah and Jerusalem for this their trespass. Yet He Sent Prophets to them, to bring them again unto The LORD; and they testified against them: but they would not give ear. And The SPIRIT of GOD Came upon Zechariah, the Son of Jehoiada, the Priest, which stood above the People, and said unto them, "Thus Saith GOD, 'Why transgress ye the Commandments of The LORD, that ye cannot prosper?' Because ye have forsaken The LORD, He hath also Forsaken you." And they conspired against him, and stoned him with stones, at the commandment of the King, in the Court of the House of The LORD.*—2 Chron. xxiv, 17 to 21.

△ "O Jerusalem! Jerusalem! thou that killest the Prophets, and stonest Them, which are Sent unto thee; how often would I have Gathered thy Children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings; and ye would not! Behold, your House is left unto you desolate! For I Say unto you, Ye shall not see Me henceforth, till ye shall say, 'Blessed is He, That Cometh in The Name of The LORD!'" —37 to 39.

How Exquisitely Beautiful, how Full of the Tenderest and most Parental Feeling, how Characteristic of the Benignant and Merciful Disposition of The SON of GOD, and of That Earnest and Persevering Effort Used by The HOLY SPIRIT to Restore Fallen Man to his forfeited Inheritance in Heaven, and especially the Chosen Nation of The SAVIOUR'S Birth, is This Apostrophe! With what irresistible Pathos doth It Touch the heart, Conveying to it at once astonishment at the Wonderful Forbearance of GOD, and at the mad infatuation of Man, and Forcing from us an acknowledgment of the Power and Justice of The DIVINE NATURE.

According to St. Luke, our SAVIOUR Prefaced this Affecting Remonstrance with a Declaration that "*It cannot be, that a Prophet perish out of Jerusalem.*" The Words of the Apostrophe are almost precisely similar: "O

*Jerusalem! Jerusalem! which killest the Prophets and stonest Them, that are Sent unto thee; how often would I have Gathered thy Children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your House is left unto you desolate! And Verily I Say unto you, Ye shall not See Me, until the time come when ye shall say, 'Blessed is He, That Cometh in The Name of The LORD.'"*—Chap. xiii, 33 to 35.

In the Song of Moses, that Beautiful Composition of Inspiration, a train of pathetic imagery is indulged in, alike demonstrative of the Benevolence and Beneficence of GOD to Man, and of Man's undutiful and unfilial demeanour towards GOD: *Give Ear, O ye Heavens, and I will speak! and hear, O Earth, the words of my mouth! My Doctrine shall drop as the rain; my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass; because I will publish the Name of The LORD. Ascribe ye Greatness unto our GOD! HE is The ROCK: His Work is Perfect: for All His Ways are Judgment: A GOD of Truth, and without iniquity; Just and Right is He. They have corrupted themselves; their spot is not the spot of His Children; they are a perverse and crooked Generation. Do ye thus requite The LORD, O foolish People and unwise! Is not He, thy FATHER, That hath Bought thee? Hath He not Made thee, and Established thee? Remember the days of old! Consider the years of many Generations! Ask thy Father, and he will shew thee; thy Elders, and they will tell thee, When The MOST HIGH Divided to the Nations their Inheritance; when He Separated the Sons of Adam, He Set the bounds of the People according to the number of the Children of Israel: for The LORD'S Portion is His People; Jacob is the Lot of His Inheritance: He Found him in a Desert Land and in the waste howling Wilderness: He Led him about; He Instructed him: He Kept him as the Apple of His Eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so The LORD Alone did Lead him. But he forsook GOD, Which Made him; and lightly esteemed The ROCK of his Salvation.*—Deut. xxxii, 1 to 12. 15. And in the Book of Esdras the very simile, Used by our SAVIOUR, is introduced: *The Word of The LORD Came unto me, Saying, "What shall I Do unto thee, O Jacob? Thou, Juda, wouldest not obey Me! I will Turn Me to other Nations, and unto Those will I Give My Name; that they may keep My Statutes. Seeing ye have Forsaken Me, I will Forsake you also. When ye desire Me to be Gracious unto you, I shall have no Mercy upon you: whensoever ye shall call upon Me, I will not Hear you; for ye have defiled your hands with blood, and your feet are swift to commit manslaughter: ye have not, as it were, forsaken Me, but your own selves, Saith The LORD. Thus Saith The Almighty LORD, Have I not Prayed you, as a Father his Sons, as a Mother her Daughters, and a Nurse her young Babes, that ye would be My People, and I should be your GOD; that ye would be My Children, and I should be your FATHER? I Gathered you together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings! But now what shall I Do unto you? I will Cast you out from My Face: when ye offer unto Me, I will Turn My Face from you; for your solemn feast days, your new moons, and your circumcisions have I Forsaken. I Sent unto you My Servants, the Prophets, whom ye have taken and slain, and torn their bodies in pieces: whose blood I will Require of your hands, Saith The LORD. Thus Saith The Almighty LORD, Your House is desolate; I will Cast you out, as the wind does stubble; and your Children shall not be fruitful, for they have despised My Commandment, and done the thing, that is evil before Me. Your Houses will I Give to a People, that shall come; which, not having heard of Me, yet shall believe Me; to whom I have Shewed no Signs, yet they shall do That I have Commanded them. They have seen no Prophets; yet they shall call their sins to remembrance, and acknowledge them. I Take to witness the Grace of the People to come; whose*

*little Ones rejoice in gladness; and though they have not seen Me with bodily eyes, yet in Spirit they believe the Thing That I Say. And now, Brother, behold what Glory! and see the People, that come from the East! Unto whom I will Give for Leaders, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Oseas, Amos, and Micheas, Joel, Abdias, and Jonas, Nahum, and Abaccuc, Sophonias, Aggeus, Zachary, and Malachy, which is called also an Angel of The LORD."*—2 Esd. i, 4. 24 to 40.

The same Figure, thus used by Esdras in the spirit of Prophecy, and by HIM, through Whom, by The HOLY GHOST, All Inspiration Springs, as well as one of those introduced in the Song of Moses, is adopted also by the Holy Psalmist, who thus prayed to The FATHER of the Universe: *Keep me as the apple of the eye! Hide me under the Shadow of Thy Wings!*—Ps. xvii, 8. And again, *He that dwelleth in the Secret Place of The MOST HIGH, shall abide under the Shadow of The ALMIGHTY! I will say of The LORD, HE is my Refuge, and my Fortress; my GOD; in Him will I trust! Surely He shall Deliver thee from the snare of the Fowler, and from the noisome pestilence: He shall Cover thee with His Feathers; and under His Wings shalt thou trust.*—Ps. xci, 1 to 4.

In Such A Refuge is Salvation; but how destitute is the condition of them that seek not for It; or, when Offered them, will have none of It! their houses will, indeed, be left desolate in the most awful sense of the word; for their Bodies, which were intended to be, and might have been, the Temples of The HOLY GHOST, are dead unto Righteousness, and present the darkness and corruption of a vault without its peacefulness, and without the spirit of hope that that corruptible shall put on incorruption, hovering over it: the desolation of Cities, the plunder of houses, the imprisonment and bond-service of our Bodies, may, for a season, cause us affliction, but which Time will end; and how light compared with the desolation of our Immortal Souls, when yielded to the arms and artifices of Satan! A State endless as hopeless, where Peace can never come, because there can be no fellowship with Saints, no Communion with A SAVIOUR!

In the Great Day of the Second Advent of The LORD JESUS, when He shall Come in the Clouds of Heaven with MAJESTY and Great Glory, when every Eye shall confess Him, and every Heart do Him reverence, when His KINGDOM shall be fully and finally Established, and His faithful Followers, as the Purchase of His Redeeming Sacrifice, shall be Sanctified unto Holiness and Heavenly Happiness, not only shall they, but all the Angels and Cherubic Host shall triumphantly and exultingly proclaim, that *Blessed is He, That Cometh in the Name of The LORD!* Such was, doubtless, the twofold view Prophetically taken by the Holy Psalmist, as recorded in the 26th verse of the cxviii Psalm. But the veil, which the pride and prejudice of the Jews cast over their eyes, (so that seeing, they would not see, in the Man CHRIST JESUS, The SON of GOD, in His First Advent in the Flesh,) does happily not blind our eyes; for we see Him, and see Him as He is, if we rightly view the Gracious Relationship, in Which He Stands towards us, as our SAVIOUR and REDEEMER, and acknowledge, from the bottom of our hearts, that He Came to Seek and to Save us; and that without His Intercession we must have been lost to all Eternity. Being in The Nature of GOD, He Cometh in The Name and Power of JEHÓVAH by His HOLY SPIRIT, to Call us by faith and repentance unto newness of Life, Renewing a right Spirit within us, that we may behold, with eyes of unspeakable gladness, The Incarnate DEITY, Reconciling, by the Atonement and Righteousness Manifested by Him, GOD to our Nature, and Dispensing Blessedness to our Souls for Eternity amidst the Visible Fulness of The Glories of The GODHEAD. For other observations on the concluding Benediction, see Chapter xxi, 9.

LAP. xxiv.—And JESUS Went out, and Departed from the Temple: and His Disciples came to Him for to shew Him the Buildings of the Temple. And JESUS Said unto them, "See ye not all these things? Verily, I Say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down!"—1, 2.

Our SAVIOUR still regarded, even by His Followers, as Man, was condered by them as without any correct idea of such parts of the City and Temple 'Jerusalem, as He had not Bodily Visited: they did not then conceive of Him, He was, Very GOD of Very GOD, or they would have felt that from the DIVINITY of His Nature He must, of necessity, be Omniscient, and would now all things past, present, and to come, even the origin, appropriation, and ture destination of every stone of that extensive and wonderful Building, the emple of Jerusalem, long the Object of DIVINE Favour; but now Mourned ver in the Contemplated awfulness of the Judgment Awaiting both that and the ity, of which it was the chief ornament. Yet charmed by their LORD and MASTER'S Eloquence, and Edified by His Discourses, with the affection of hildren to a Parent the Disciples were, in the warmth of devotedness, earnest shew their MASTER all that was remarkable in the Place; and on His eaving the interior of the Temple they came to exhibit to Him its exterior, id, probably, the Buildings around, or in connection with it; little expecting hat did result from it, the Prophetic Assurance, from The ORACLE of RUTH Itself, of the downfall and desolation of the whole.

The narrative by St. Mark is thus: *And as JESUS Went out of the Temple, one of His Disciples saith unto Him, "MASTER, See what manner of stones and what Buildings are here!" And JESUS Answering, Said unto him, "Seest thou these great Buildings? There shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down!"*—Chap. xiii, 1, 2.

The account by St. Luke is as follows: *And as Some spake of the Temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, JESUS Said, "As for these things, which ye behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down!"*—Chap. xxi, 5, 6.

In all these Evangelists, the Prophecy even to the very letter corresponds; and the slight variance as to the incident, that gave rise to Its Delivery, is quite atural, when that was not the prominent object in recording It; and two out of three Historians depended on the reports of Other Persons.

The fate of Jerusalem and its Temple, in ruins and desolation for the iniquity and faithlessness of its People, thus positively Predicted by our SAVIOUR, as then shortly to come to pass, had long previously been Declared by The DIVINE Word as Conditionally Impending over them; for on the completion of the Original Temple by King Solomon, The LORD, Appearing unto Him in a Vision, Said, "*If ye (the People of Israel,) shall at all turn from following Me, ye, or your Children, and will not keep My Commandments and My statutes, Which I have Set before you, but go and serve other gods and worship them, then will I Cut off Israel out of the Land, which I have Given them: and this house, which I have Hallowed for My Name, will I Cast out of My Sight: and Israel shall be a Proverb and a by-word among all People: and at this House, which is high, every One, that passeth by it, shall be astonished, and shall hiss; and they shall say, 'Why hath The LORD Done thus unto this Land and to this house? And they shall answer, 'Because they forsook The LORD, their GOD, Who Brought forth their Fathers out of the Land of Egypt, and have taken hold upon other gods, and have worshipped them and served them: therefore hath The LORD Brought upon them all this evil.'*"—1 Kings ix, 6 to 9.

And the Threat of DIVINE Vengeance thus Mercifully Communicated to Israel, by fear, from idolatry, was afterwards Changed to a Positive Denunciation

by the Same SPIRIT of Prophecy, when the impiety of the People called loudly for the wages of sin, when the Prophet Micah, thus proclaimed unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin: *Hear this, I pray you, ye Heads of the House of Jacob, and Princes of the House of Israel, that abhor judgment and pervert all equity! They build up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity: the Heads thereof judge for reward, and the Priests thereof teach for hire, and the Prophets thereof divine for money: yet will they lean upon The LORD, and say, "Is not The LORD among us? None evil can come upon us!" Therefore shall Zion, for your sake, be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the Mountain of the House as the high places of the Forest.*—Micah iii, 9 to 12.

This Foretelling of the Prophet, was quoted by the Prophet Jeremiah in the succeeding century, Chapter xxvi, 18.

On another occasion, according to St. Luke, our SAVIOUR, in a Manner the most feelingly Affectionate and Impressive, thus Commiseratingly Dwelt on the then fast approaching fate of the highly Favoured but unnatural Zion, Saying, on Beholding the City, and even Weeping over it, "*If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the Things, which belong unto thy peace! But now They are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine Enemies shall cast a trench about thee and compass thee round, and keep thee on every side; and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy Children within thee: and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the Time of thy Visitation.*"—Chap. xix, 41 to 44.

What was thus Threatened and Foretold, has literally come to pass; and the Temple, and Jerusalem itself, became the habitation of bitterns and of bats.

May we take especial care that a corresponding Fate of Disaster befall not us, and the City of our Jerusalem! which it may do, if we, and Others of its Inhabitants, do not worship, in the fear of The LORD, towards His Temple, and hail, from the heart, the Advent of MESSIAH; manifesting a lively faith in the Necessity and Sufficiency of His Mediatorial Offering.

△ And as He Sat upon the Mount of Olives, the Disciples came unto Him privately, saying, "Tell us when shall These Things be? and What shall be the Sign of Thy Coming, and of the End of the World?" And JESUS Answered, and Said unto them. "Take heed that no Man deceive you! For Many shall come in My Name, saying, 'I am CHRIST:' and shall deceive Many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars! see that ye be not troubled! for All These Things must come to pass: but the end is not yet. For Nation shall rise against Nation, and Kingdom against Kingdom; and there shall be Famines and Pestilences and Earthquakes in divers Places. All These are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you; and ye shall be hated of all Nations for My Name's Sake. And then shall Many be offended, and shall betray One Another, and shall hate One Another. And many false Prophets shall rise, and shall deceive Many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of Many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the Same shall be Saved. And This Gospel of The KINGDOM shall be Preached in all the World for a Witness unto all Nations. And then shall the End come."—3 to 14.

With an anxiety natural and justifiable, since it was not Rebuked by the Mouth of All Wisdom and Knowledge and Power, the Disciples ask, When the Calamities, thus Foretold as Suspended over Jerusalem and its hitherto Sacred Temple, should be Poured forth? and this inquiry, it seems, they urged in privacy, from an apprehension, probably, that it might not be Acceptable to their MASTER to be challenged to Avow it in Public. But it is fairly inferable that they entertained no doubt that What was Delivered, awful as in the event it must prove, and known, as it only could be, to GOD, or through His Inspiration, would assuredly come to pass.

The account given by St. Mark of this interesting Conversation, is as follows: *And as JESUS Sat upon the Mount of Olives over against the Temple, Peter and James, and John and Andrew, asked Him privately, "Tell us, when shall these Things be? and What shall be the Sign, when All These Things shall be fulfilled?" And JESUS Answering them, Began to Say, "Take heed lest any man deceive you! for Many shall come in My Name, saying, 'I am CHRIST:' and shall deceive Many: and when ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars, be not troubled! for such things must needs be: but the End shall not be yet; for there shall rise against Nation, and Kingdom against Kingdom, and there shall be Earthquakes in divers Places; and there shall be Famines and Troubles: These are the beginnings of sorrows! But take heed to yourselves! for they shall deliver you up to Councils; and in the Synagogues ye shall be beaten; and ye shall be brought before Rulers and Kings for My Sake, for a testimony against them: and the Gospel must first be Published among all Nations. But when they shall lead you and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do premeditate! but whatsoever shall be Given you in that hour, that speak ye! for it is not ye, that speak, but The HOLY GHOST! Now the Brother shall betray the Brother to death; and the Father the Son: and Children shall rise up against their Parents, and shall cause them to be put to death: and ye shall be hated of all Men for My Name's Sake. But he, that shall endure unto the end, the Same shall be Saved."*—Chap. xiii, 3 to 13.

Natural as was this curiosity to Men, not then having all the knowledge of the SPIRIT in the fulness of Faith, yet our LORD did not Gratify it to the full; it is in That Way only, Which was perfectly Consistent with the Wise and benevolent Purposes of GOD towards Mankind in general, by Seeking to influence them to be ever on the watch, and in a state of preparation for and of signation to The DIVINE Will; that come when the End might, and come in the interval what trials and calamities should be Appointed, they might meet such Visitations in a patient and becoming Spirit. And the same goodly and salutary advice was inculcated by the Gentile Apostle, when, speaking of That final Consummation of all Things Terrestrial, the general Resurrection, (and which, to all purposes of Salvation, may be regarded by Each of us as hanging in the sure but unknown instant of our life's termination here; for there is no work to be done towards it in the grave,) he says, *But of the Times and the Seasons, Brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you; for yourselves know perfectly, that The Day of The LORD so Cometh as a Thief in the night: for when they shall say, "Peace and Safety!" then sudden Destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a Woman with Child: and they shall not escape. But ye, Brethren, are not in darkness, that That Day should overtake you as a Thief. Ye are all the Children of Light, and the Children of the Day! We are not of the night, nor of darkness: therefore let us not sleep, as do Others! but let us watch and be sober!*—1 Thess. v, 1 to 6.

To be deceived by Man, or by the Spirit of evil, (which is Spiritual Darkness,) when the Light of Man's CREATOR is Shed around us, and the Means of Spiritual Wisdom and Knowledge are Open to us, is to trust in the arm of flesh, rather than in The Living GOD, and to be the willing and confirmatory instruments of our own Everlasting Destruction. Against such excess of folly the Voice of HEAVENLY Affection Cautions us to take heed, and if we desire to shun the path that leads to Eternal Woe, we shall find, in the Gracious UTTERER of Those Counsels, not only the Words of Admonition, but the Work of Assistance; for He Hateth a lying tongue, and the councils of the Wicked will He Set at nought, and Visit their iniquities on their own evil heads; and the pit, wherein they thought to catch Others, will open only to receive



themselves. Let us, therefore, trust in The LORD and in the Power of His Might, Who, by His Grace, will Save us from all deceivableness of sin, and from that danger, which necessarily awaits the trifling with Matters of Eternity, and the putting off, from day to day, till it is too late, that most needful preparation of the Soul for that most Awful Day, when The SON of Man, in the Fulness of The Majesty and Glory of The GODHEAD, shall Come to Judge the World in Righteousness, and Deliver the Irrevocable and Irreversible Sentence of Happiness or Misery to each Individual of our Race. What horror will then overwhelm those, who, though Cautioned by WISDOM and COMPASSION United, took no heed against Man's deceit, or Satan's allurements, but preferred to follow the ensnaring counsels of the Wicked One, and the indulgence of evil associations, to the observing the still small but safely guiding voice of Conscience, speaking by The HOLY SPIRIT within, and the Declared Counsel of The Almighty and Omniscient JEHOVAH, Laid Open in the Holy Scriptures, Which were Revealed to Make Men wise unto Salvation.

△ What The Great MASTER Admonished, was echoed also thus by St. Paul: *Let no Man deceive you with vain words!* [Eph. v, 6.] and again, *Beware lest any Man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of Men, after the rudiments of the World; and not after CHRIST!* [Col. ii, 8.] and again, more expressly and directly to the same purport as his LORD: *Now we beseech you, Brethren, by the Coming of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, and by our gathering together unto Him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by Spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the Day of CHRIST is at hand! Let no Man deceive you by any means! For that Day shall not come, except there come a falling away first; and that Man of sin be revealed, the Son of Perdition, who opposeth and exalleth himself above All, That is Called GOD, or That is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the Temple of GOD, shewing himself that he is GOD. The mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he, who now letteth, will let, until he be taken out of the way: and then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom The LORD shall Consume with the Spirit of His Mouth, and shall Destroy with the Brightness of His Coming; even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them, that perish, because they received not the love of The Truth, that they might be Saved.—2 Thess. ii, 1 to 4. 7 to 10. And the Beloved Disciple of JESUS thus affectionately exhorts All, who will learn of him to their Soul's edification: *Beloved, believe not every Spirit; but try the Spirits, whether they are of GOD! Because many false Prophets are gone out into the World! Hereby know ye The SPIRIT of GOD! Every Spirit, that confesseth that JESUS CHRIST is Come in the Flesh, is of GOD; and every Spirit, that confesseth not that JESUS CHRIST is Come in the Flesh, is not of GOD: and this is that Spirit of Anti-Christ, whereof ye have heard, that it should come; and even now already is it in the World.—1 John iv, 1 to 3.**

All deception is of the corruption of our own heart, which clouds the understanding and veils the senses from That Light, Which Shines unto the Everlasting Day, Disclosing the Excellency and Communicating the Means of Spiritual Wisdom, in meekness and purity and holiness of desire, and Imparting the blissful gifts of Peace and Heavenly Hope through Faith in JESUS CHRIST: It Enables us to see Him as He is, and ourselves as we ought to be for the attainment of our Happiness and the advancement of our Eternal Welfare: It Diffuses over the Soul that hallowed love of GOD, which casteth out the fear of any danger or Enemy in this Life; and uniting in us the wisdom of the serpent and the harmlessness of the dove, Fortifies us against the advances of Satan, by Giving us strength and presence of mind to baffle and overcome the temptations of the

l, the allurements of the Flesh, and the artifices of the Devil; and Teaches lessons of resignation, contentedness, and gratitude, in patience to possess souls, and await, in humility, the Coming of our LORD and SAVIOUR [that Judgment, Which will Crown the Souls of the Faithful with Pure and ~~as~~ Joy. Whereas, by the rejection of the Guidance of The HOLY IT, Man lays himself open to the influence of the Destroyer, and, as the fruits of his own folly and wickedness, is led into all manner of deception. was so before The Gospel Light Shone forth, and has been so throughout istory of Man. Thus powerfully does the Prophet Jeremiah delineate in respect the character of his own time: *THE LORD Said unto me "The lets prophesy lies in My Name! I Sent them not! By sword and famine those Prophets be consumed; and the People, to whom they prophesy, shall be ut in the Streets of Jerusalem, because of the famine and the sword; and shall have None to bury them, their Wives, nor their Sons, nor their hters, for I will Pour their wickedness upon them."*—Jer. xiv, 14 to 16. it will be so since The Gospel has been Proclaimed; for It is The Same, Who Ruleth over all the Kingdoms of the Earth, and Who Knoweth the s of all Men; since it is sin in every variety, but more especially hypocrisy, alienates from Man the Affection of GOD, and quenches the Influence of HOLY SPIRIT in the Soul; at the same time giving encouragement to the es of Satan, who is truly but emphatically termed, "The Father of lies." Recorded of our SAVIOUR, that on another Occasion, when at Jerusalem, Remonstrating with the unbelieving Jews around Him. He Said, "*Ye have he love of GOD in you! I am Come in My FATHER'S Name, and ye e Me not! If Another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.*"—v, 42 to 43.

False Prophets may come, and false doctrines be attempted to be dissemi- amongst us, aiming at the subversion of our faith and the corruption of hearts, but the attempt will fail, if we be strong in The LORD, and in the r of His Might; for then we need not fear what Man or Man's chiefest y Satan, can do unto us; since, though they may persecute or kill the y, yet, having this done, they have nothing more that they can do. The ations of GOD'S Judgment upon Earth for the Chastisement of the Wicked, for the Support and Praise of them that do well, will Enable us to rejoice, h with trembling; and though wars and rumours of wars may prevail, and h pestilence and famine, as well as the sword, may rage around us, yet d we in patience possess our Souls, and wait The LORD'S Own Good, assured that His Enemies will be Overwhelmed, and His KINGDOM be ly and Fully Established. For terrible as are the calamities which Man, is disobedience, has brought upon himself, yet the Christian, amidst the rience of a portion of them, and the trials and temptations that peculiarly him, stands unshaken from his faith in the Final Victory of The Great TAIN of his Salvation, knowing that the Day of Eternal Rest, if not at, cannot be far off, or beyond the close of the Life that is; and that when- it does arrive, it will assuredly crown his patience with triumph and his with fruition. In this our Day of existence, much of awful and disastrous t is passing before our eyes; and though not the beginning of sorrows, as ed to in the Text, since similar Punishments have been Poured out upon ding Generations, yet may we rejoice that the End is not yet; that Time rded us to make our peace with GOD, through JESUS CHRIST; and we may yet, through the Enlightening, Guiding, Purifying, and Animating nces of The HOLY SPIRIT, as the First Fruits of our REDEEMER'S

Love, work out our Salvation, and taste that indeed The LORD is Gracious, and have the assurance in our Souls, that Come when The SON of GOD may, to Judge the World, He will Come with Mercy on His Tongue to us, and will Speak Peace to our Souls.

What The SPIRIT of GOD Said by Azariah unto Asa the then King of Israel, we may apply, as a Lesson of profitable Instruction, unto ourselves: *THE LORD is with you, while ye be with Him; and, if ye seek Him, He will be Found of you! But, if ye forsake Him, He will Forsake you! Now for a long season Israel hath been without The True GOD, and without a teaching Priest, and without Law! But when they, in their trouble, did turn unto The LORD GOD of Israel, and sought Him, He was Found of them. And in those times there was no Peace to him, that went out; nor to him, that came in; but great vexations were upon all the Inhabitants of the Countries; and Nation was destroyed of Nation, and City of City; for GOD did Vex them with all adversity. Be ye strong, therefore, (strong in faith,) and let not your hands be weak, (nor your hearts) faint, for your work shall be Rewarded!*—2 Chron. xv, 1 to 7.

So by the Prophet Haggai, was the like awful Denunciation of The ALMIGHTY'S High Displeasure thus made, and which the Prophet pointedly addressed to Zerubbabel, the then Governor of Judah, as the Very Words of JEHOVAH, Saying, "*I will Shake the Heavens and the Earth; and I will Overthrow the throne of Kingdoms, and I will Destroy the strength of the Kingdoms of the Heathen; and I will Overthrow the Chariots, and Those, that ride in them; and the horses and their Riders shall come down, every One by the sword of his Brother!*"—Hag. ii, 20 to 22.

△ Rarely, if ever, since the Period of our SAVIOUR'S Visit upon Earth, has the prevalence of Peace been general upon it: wars and rumours of wars have prevailed, and Nation has risen against Nation, City against City, and Brother against Brother; and severe have been the contests even amongst the Professors of the faith of CHRIST, That PRINCE of Peace, for the establishment of their perverse and Spiritually-proud minds, under the semblance of zeal, to further the purposes of their ambition and thirst for power; thus counteracting the Gracious Intent of the Meek and Patient and Loving JESUS, and giving occasion for His Holy Name and His Pure and Perfect Doctrine to be evil spoken of and blasphemed. But long as has thus been the conflict between Man and Man, the Day of The LORD has yet to Arrive,—It will assuredly come; and gratefully should we acknowledge the Merciful Forbearance of The ALMIGHTY; and carefully should we abstain from filling up, individually, the measure of general iniquity, lest that Day of Terror come upon us and find us without hope; because without a true and lively faith, spreading from repentance to amendment and obedience unto Holiness. Deeply as may be felt by Any of us the Visitation of Human calamity, and multiplied as may be the sources and magnified the progress of it, yet on such beginning and, however lengthened, continuance of sorrows, if we receive them, as they doubtless are Dispensed, for our Spiritual good, they will be salutary to our Soul's health and peace, and consolatory in prospect as assuredly blissful in the result: for at the close of the Life that is, our sorrow, whatever may have been its degree, will be turned into Joy unspeakable and full of Glory, through the Intercession and Imputed Merits of That MEDIATOR, Who was Himself a Man of Sorrows, and Acquainted with Grief; but Rose Triumphant over sin and Death and Hell, that we, whatever may have been for His Sake our tribulation upon Earth, might enter into The KINGDOM of GOD and the Joy of our SAVIOUR'S Rest.

See the observations on Chapter x, 17, where the same Danger, awaiting

the true Believers and zealous Servants of The LORD, is Foretold, and against which the whole Armour of GOD should be put on and unceasingly worn for our Protection.

St. Luke's description of this Conversation is thus: *As Some spake of the Temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, JESUS Said, "As for these things, which ye behold, the Days will come in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down!" And they asked Him, saying, "MASTER, But when shall these things be? and what Sign will there be when these things shall come to pass?" And He Said, "Take heed that ye be not deceived: for Many shall come in My Name, saying, 'I am CHRIST: and the time draweth near!' Go ye not, therefore, after them! But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified! for these things must first come to pass. But the End is not by and by." Then Said He unto them, "Nation shall rise against Nation, and Kingdom against Kingdom; and great Earthquakes shall be in divers Places; and Famine and Pestilences, and fearful Sightings and great Signs shall there be from Heaven. But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the Synagogues and into Prisons; being brought before Kings and Rulers for My Name's Sake: and it shall turn to you for a Testimony."*—Chap. xxi, 5 to 13.


The Consolation, however, Held forth, equally with the Preparation, by our SAVIOUR to His immediate Disciples, may be applied to ourselves: *"If the World hate you, (Said He, Who Knoweth all things, even the counsels of the heart of Man, and the Deep Things of GOD,) ye know that it hated Me before it hated you. If ye were of the World, the World would love his own: but because ye are not of the World, but I have Chosen you out of the World, therefore the World hateth you: remember the Word, that I Said unto you, 'The Servant is not greater than his Lord.' If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you."*—John. xv, 18 to 20. And in continuation of the same Forewarning and Assurance of DIVINE Protection under the Visitation of Persecution for CHRIST'S Sake, He is, by the last quoted Evangelist, thus recorded to have Expressed Himself: *"He, that hateth Me, hateth My FATHER also!"* But then He Adds, *"When The COMFORTER is Come, Whom I will Send unto you from The FATHER, even The SPIRIT of Truth, Which Proceedeth from The FATHER; He shall Testify of Me. And ye also shall bear Witness, because ye have been with Me from the beginning: These Things have I Spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended: they shall put you out of the Synagogue; yea, the time cometh, that Whosoever killeth you, will think that he doeth GOD service."*—John xv, 23, 26, 27. xvi, 1, 2.

As our SAVIOUR Predicted, so, indeed, very speedily, did Events realize the Prediction: for, soon as The SHEPHERD was Withdrawn, the Sheep were scattered abroad, and were beset on all sides by fierce and ravenous Wolves, who eagerly seized upon them, with savage malignity, as their prey: for in the early narrative of the Acts of the Apostles, (the peculiarly Chosen Servants of The LORD,) it is recorded, that *As they spake unto the People, the Priests and the Captain of the Temple, and the Sadducees came upon them, being grieved that they taught the People, and preached, through JESUS, the Resurrection from the Dead. And they laid hands on them, and put them in hold.*—Acts iv, 1 to 3. Nor did the Spirit of Persecution content itself with the imprisonment of the Objects of its malice; for torture and massacre were added to suppress the mild but persevering influence of these Devotees to their MASTER'S Honour, and the propagation of the only hope of Salvation; but which hope, both Jews and Gentiles, in the infatuated folly of their pride and prejudice, strove to destroy and crush, as it were, in its birth. To stripes and imprisonments suc-

ceeded the death of Many of the early and zealous Supporters of the Christian faith. Thus the devoted Stephen, undaunted by the threats of a turbulent and blood-thirsting Mob of Blasphemers of his LORD, not only openly preached JESUS, as The MESSIAH, but boldly accused those, then surrounding him, of being Accessories to the murder of The LORD of Life and Glory; and thus drew down upon himself the protracted agonies of a death by stoning; sealing, by his sufferings and blood, the testimony of his faith; and even exulting in those sufferings for the Sake of Him, and as incurred in the Cause of Him, Who had Freely Offered Himself A SACRIFICE for All, who would come unto GOD through Him. To the martyrdom of St. Stephen (so fully and affectingly recorded in the vii Chapter of the Acts,) succeeded the *beheading of St. James by King Herod*, through a contemptible subserviency to the prejudices of the Chief Priests and Rulers amongst the Anti-Christian Jews. And immediately thereupon followed the *imprisonment of St. Peter* [Acts xii, 1 to 4]. But These All in their sufferings evinced their unshaken faith in the Predictions of JESUS, their acknowledged LORD; remembering, to their Soul's support and consolation, those exceeding Great and Precious Promises, Which He had Made to them; even the hope of Eternal Blessedness in the Life to Come, a hope, which was still inculcated and spread abroad by the surviving Disciples of The SAVIOUR, with a zeal unchecked by opposition, and unsubdued by oppression. And St. Peter, though himself so much the Object of persecution, and so severely and frequently smarting under its effects, thus fervently exhorts to patience and fortitude and perseverance, and encourages to hope, saying, in the language of Christian love and fellowship, *Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial, which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice! inasmuch as ye are Partakers of CHRIST'S Sufferings; that, when His Glory shall be Revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding Joy. If ye be reproached for the Name of CHRIST, happy are ye! for The SPIRIT of Glory and of GOD Resteth upon you! On their part He is evil spoken of: but on your part He is Glorified. But let None of you suffer as a Murderer, or as a Thief, or as an Evil-Doer, or as a Busy-Body in other Men's matters! yet if any Man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed: but let him glorify GOD on this behalf: For the time is come that Judgment must Begin at the House of GOD: and, if It first Begin at us, What shall the end be of Them that obey not The Gospel of GOD? And, if the Righteous scarcely be Saved, where shall the Ungodly and the Sinner appear? Wherefore let them, that suffer according to the Will of GOD, commit the keeping of their Souls to Him in well-doing, as unto A Faithful CREATOR!*—1 Peter iv, 12 to 19. And St. John, who was himself, for his adherence to the Faith of CHRIST, sent into banishment, thus communicated The DIVINE Revelation Made to him, alike for the encouraging as for the enlightening of All, that piously seek to arrive at Spiritual Truth and Holiness amidst the conflicts with the World: *He, that hath an ear, let him hear What The SPIRIT Saith unto the Churches; "To him, that overcometh, will I Give to eat of the Tree of Life, Which is in the midst of the Paradise of GOD!" And unto the Angel of the Church in Smyrna write! These Things Saith The FIRST and The LAST, Which was Dead, and is Alive, "I Know thy works and tribulation and poverty, but thou art rich; and I Know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not; but are the Synagogue of Satan. Fear none of these things, which thou shalt suffer! Behold, the Devil shall cast Some of you into Prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation! Be thou faithful unto death, and I will Give thee a Crown of Life."* *He, that hath an ear, let him hear What The SPIRIT Saith unto the Churches: "He, that overcometh, shall not be hurt of the Second Death."* *He, that hath an ear, let him hear What The SPIRIT*

*Saith unto the Churches: "To him, that overcometh, will I Give to eat of the Hidden Manna, and will Give him a White Stone, and in the Stone a new Name Written, which no Man knoweth, saving he that receiveth It. And he, that overcometh, and keepeth My Works unto the end, to him will I Give power."*—Rev. ii, 7. 11 to 17. 26.

In this our day, Persecution likewise prevails, but in a different form: Men are not now every where pursued unto temporal death for professing a faith in The Name of CHRIST: but the Spirit of him who is faithful, in not only professing, but in being indeed a Christian, is often exposed to much grievousness and bitter trial, in witnessing the wickedness and blasphemy of Others, and oftentimes of those in near relationship to himself. The Precepts and the Example of CHRIST, if zealously fulfilled and followed, cause such a separation from the Lovers of the World, and the unwarrantable pleasures and pursuits thereof, and so markedly distinguish the two Characters, that the Christian is scoffed and reviled by Those, who, in Spirit, are None of CHRIST'S; though, as mere Formalists, they may worship and profess to honour His Name. And other persecutions, than those from the outward Enemies or hypocritical Friends of CHRIST'S Religion, await Those who would be CHRIST'S at His Coming, namely, the evil propensities, the ambitious or sensual desires of their own hearts; for as St. Paul truly insisteth, *the Flesh warreth against the Spirit*; and the love of praise and the thirst after riches are dangerous snares in the way of the Christian's path. But if we look to the Reward that is Promised to a perseverance in faith unto the end, and look to That with the earnestness and steadfastness we ought, how supportable would be the trials, how vain the temptations, and how light the afflictions we might have to encounter here: no desire of the heart, or impulse of the mind would be cherished or dwelt upon, that had not Eternity and Holy and Heavenly Communion for their aim and end; and connectingly submission to the Will of An All-Wise and All-Gracious CREATOR for its Rule and Governance.

Though CHRIST Knew that Many would be offended in Him, yet Did He,  thus, All that DIVINE Mercy, Controuled necessarily in a Degree by DIVINE Justice, could Do to Exhort to love and obedience. We have already seen (at Chapter xi, 6,) the Benediction He Pronounced on Such, as should prove faithful unto Him, and consistent Supporters of His Doctrine. And St. Paul, in like manner, holds out the most encouraging Prospects to true obedience; at the same time instancing, historically, the Fulfilment of our SAVIOUR'S Prophecy of schism and division even among His Professed Followers, saying, *GOD hath not Given us the spirit of fear; but of power and of love and of a sound mind*: and he, therefore, thus exhorts, *Be not, therefore, ashamed of the Testimony of our LORD; but be (if so Called upon in exercise of faith,) Partakers of the afflictions of The Gospel, according to the Power of GOD; Who hath Saved us; and Called us with an Holy Calling; not according to our works, but according to His Own Purpose and Grace, Which was Given us in CHRIST JESUS before the World began; but is now Made Manifest by the Appearing of our SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST, Who hath Abolished Death, and hath Brought Life and Immortality to Light through The Gospel: Whereunto I am Appointed a Preacher and an Apostle, and a Teacher of the Gentiles; for the which Cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know Whom I have believed; and am persuaded that He is Able to Keep that, which I have committed unto Him, against that Day. All they, which are in Asia, be turned away from me!*—2 Tim. i, 7 to 15.

And Again, the same Apostle, with a feeling of deep sorrow at the increasing spread of infidelity, thus particularised Some of the Separatists from the

Christian League, saying, *Demas hath forsaken me; having loved this present World! Alexander, the Copper-smith, did me much evil: at my first answer no Man stood with me; but all Men forsook me! I pray GOD that it may not be laid to their charge.*—2 Tim. iv, 10. 14. 16.

Our SAVIOUR had previously Foretold of the coming of false Prophets, and had Cautioned His Disciples against being misled by them, Giving them a sure test, by which the deceptions would be unmasked by directing attention to the fruits of their labours, which would prove, as it were, wild grapes, disappointment, and discomfiture. (See Chapter vii, 15.) The same Prophetic view of evil Ministry was afterwards laid open by St. Paul to the Gentile Converts; for after earnestly exhorting to vigilance and care in the Appointed Pastors of CHRIST'S Flock, he thus continues: *Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves and to all the Flock, over the which The HOLY GHOST hath Made you Overseers, to feed the Church of GOD, Which He hath Purchased with His own Blood!* (he then adds,) *For I Know this, that after my departure, shall grievous wolves enter in among you; not sparing the Flock: also of your own selves shall Men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away Disciples after them: therefore watch!*—Acts xx, 28 to 31. So also St. Peter: *There were false Prophets among the People; even as there shall be false Teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying The LORD, That Bought them; and bring upon themselves swift destruction: and Many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the Way of Truth shall be evil spoken of.*—2 Peter ii, 1, 2.

The reign of Spiritual Pride, however long it may last upon Earth, will not survive it, and when it falls, great will be the fall thereof. In every One of its Votaries it must cease, when Life terminates. Blessed are they who shrink from its GOD-defying tendency, and will not yield to its Soul-destroying influence! May we have no part nor lot with it, but cleave unto the Testimonies of our GOD, and walk in the Ways of His Commandments, resting on His Graciously Revealed Promises of Salvation; and knowing that His Grace is Sufficient for us, whatever may be the trial of our faith, or the measure of our temptation: assured that we are not Called to believe in cunningly devised fables, but that we know in Whom we have trusted; and knowing that they only finally perish, who, in the infatuation of Human folly, set up Human wisdom as the god of their idolatry, or yield to Human passion the direction of that Reason, the peculiar distinction of Man amongst all Earthly Objects of Creation, but which GOD Gave to be subservient to the Gracious Guidance of His HOLY SPIRIT. False Prophets may proclaim, and false Preachers may discourse, but it is over Those only, who will not make The LORD their Strength, and The HOLY SPIRIT their Guide, and JESUS their MEDIATOR, that such preaching and such prophesying have their pernicious sway. For against the Lowly in heart, and with them, who trust in The SAVIOUR of the World, such devices of Satan are Made frustrate, and come to nought. St. Paul said, *The SPIRIT Speaketh expressly, "That in the latter times Some shall depart from the faith; giving heed to seducing Spirits, and doctrines of Devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron."*—1 Tim. iv, 1, 2. Thus shewing that it is from Man's own disposition to evil, whether sensual or intellectual, that he is either the Servant or Master of false prophecies. In humility and prayer, in an honest examination of ourselves, and a studious perusal and attentive and persevering application of the Precepts of Holy Scripture, and in an entire dependance on the Protecting and Fortifying Graces of DIVINE Love, through faith in the Propitiating Sacrifice of The SON of GOD, is to be found, and found by All, who will thus seek it, the antidote against the being deceived by Others, or becoming the willing Victims of Self-

deception in Matters relating to and essentially affecting our Everlasting State and Happiness. Let us, therefore, first have faith in the equal Necessity and Sufficiency of CHRIST'S Sacrifice for the Pardon of our sins and The ALMIGHTY'S Reconciliation to our Souls, on the condition of our hearty repentance and amendment, looking to JESUS as The AUTHOR and FINISHER of our faith, and to the Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT for Guiding and Preserving us in all Wisdom and Righteousness and Holiness of Life and conversation! Thus may we hope to receive as the Purchase, not of our own (for what have we that we have not received from GOD,) but of CHRIST'S Merits Put forth on our behalf, the Inestimable, but otherwise irrecoverably forfeited Blessing of His Eternal Favour. And let us, by continuing instant in mental prayer, seek to add to our faith knowledge of the Will and Ways of GOD, and to that knowledge the virtue of humility and holy reverence and filial love, that so we may be Kept from the paths of the Destroyer of Souls: and, though it needs be that offences should come, the Denunciation of Woe against Those, by whom they come, will not extend to us.

The prevalence of disaffection to CHRIST'S Government, Mild and Merciful as It is, and having only for Its Object the Everlasting Happiness of Men, must be a source of unceasing astonishment to the Angels in Heaven; and the cause of such disregard or indifference, the ignoble dedication of the Immortal Soul of Man to the lusts of the eye and the pride of Life, must additionally surprise them. But that they, who have once tasted of the Sweetness of CHRIST'S Love, who have joined in hallowing His Name, should, in apostasy, cast off their allegiance, and fling from them the Means of Grace and the Hope of Glory Everlasting, must be a source of mournful reflection to every Christian Heart, and will, eventually, be of the deepest Self-condemnation to the Proud and Sensual themselves. The Human heart is, with truth, said to be deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; and, from the general manners of any Community taking an evil bias, ~~is apt to view~~ <sup>is apt to be misled</sup> the character of those manners in a light that renders them, to superficial Observers, less Criminal and self-destructive than in reality they are. But the love of Such as, if once warm, waxeth cold amidst even the abundance and overflowing of iniquity Foretold in the Text, and now, alas! but too accurately fulfilled, must be a love not grounded or built up in a right faith, nor centering in gratitude, nor directed to Everlasting Purposes: for if it had been, there would with Such be no variableness, neither shadow of turning: on the contrary, it must have been a love resting in outward and merely lip-service, yielded to for present convenience or the hope of present benefit; not planted in the heart, nor nurtured with dependance on The SPIRIT of GOD, for a Supply of Grace to keep its impulse in continual exercise. Better would it have been for us not to have known the Word of GOD, and His Offer of Redeeming Love through CHRIST, than, so knowing, to reject or slight Them; better not to have put the hand to the plough, than, having done it, to look and turn back, and desist from the labour of love: for He, Who so Laboured to Take from us the stain of sin, and the sting of Death; and to Obtain for us Eternal Blessedness in a Communion of Holiness, cannot, consistently with DIVINE Justice, Save us, if we will not give Efficacy to His Intercession by adopting It, and fulfilling our part of That Covenant of Pardon and Reconciliation and Everlasting Peace, Which He Sealed with His Blood, by yielding up to It our faith, and manifesting the sincerity of that faith by repentance and obedience unto Holiness. To the mind of the Serious and Reflecting, it must be an admitted truth that the general adoption of corrupt manners and loose and unscriptural opinions, cannot render them less obnoxious to A Pure and Holy GOD, or less dangerous to every One so individually




offending. If, by purity and love unfeigned, The KINGDOM of HEAVEN, Purchased for us by CHRIST'S Sacrifice, is to Prevail in the heart through faith, as the Gift of The SPIRIT, amidst the discouragement of cotemporary corruption and bad example in Others, yet let us not forget that Self-love alone is wisdom, when directed in the way of Godliness; and that in the inducement to sin, nothing of permanent benefit can possibly be found to justify our abandonment of That Hope, Which is full of a Glorious Immortality. *Go not with the Multitude to do evil!* but, remembering that *GOD Setteth the Solitary in Families*; and to them, that persevere in well doing, is the Promise Made of Participation in the Glorious Triumph of The REDEEMER over sin and Death at the Last Day, may we be *instant and watching unto prayer*, that we may be found amongst the Faithful at His Coming; and, having served and honoured Him on Earth, share His Rich and Joy-Creating Love Everlastingly in Heaven. But if, on the contrary, we sin, because Others tread the paths of evil, we eat, as it were, our own flesh, and shall bring on ourselves the awful responsibility of spreading the influence of Satan's Kingdom, and working, by our example, unrighteousness in Others: and when the Day of Judgment Comes, and the Utmost Effort of DIVINE Love, as Put forth in the Sacrifice of The SON of GOD, will alone Save even the Righteous, we shall be left without any claim on Its Efficacy, and shall find, when the admission of the knowledge will nothing avail to our advantage, that *there is no peace for the Wicked*, and shall be affected with that fear, from which endless torment is inseparable.

By patience and perseverance in well doing, and not by transient gleams, as it were, of godliness, is it that the Reasoning Soul of Man renders its becoming homage and service to The GOD, Who Made it, and so Richly Endowed it; and Who, by His Holy Word in Mercy Revealed to us, by His HOLY SON in Mercy Sacrificed for us, and by His HOLY SPIRIT Striving within us, so Wondrously Seeks to Bring us to that State of Salvation, by faith and obedience, as will insure us the fulness of Spiritual Felicity, Which shall endure without end. It is by a steady adherence to Gospel Principles, by a regulation of the Life and conversation, and all the thoughts and purposes of the heart upon the System, Which They so beautifully Point out, and so forcibly Illustrate in the Example as well as Doctrine both of our SAVIOUR and His Apostles and faithful Followers, that we can reasonably look for Pardon and Acceptance from GOD, and His Adoption of us as Children and Members of His Blessed SON'S Household of Faith. For then only have we the Earnest of The SPIRIT, when we bring forth fruits meet for repentance unto Salvation: and though our own works but exemplify our faith in the Salvation Offered us in CHRIST, and are not the Cause of our Salvation, yet are they Acceptable to GOD, and Received as Testimonies of our belief in the Record and Promises of The Gospel. How poor, indeed must our best works appear, when contrasted with Those Wrought for us by The SON of GOD: for He Endured the inconceivable Painfulness of a Separation, though but for a season, from the Glories of The FATHER, and had His Pure and Perfect SPIRIT Agonized by the pollutions of His Own Sinful Creatures being poured upon It in all their accumulated hatefulness and deformity; every single offence of every individual Sinner, in every Age of the World, being more piercing to His Soul than the spear of the Soldier at His Crucifixion to His Body, and more nauseous to His Spiritual Taste than the gall and vinegar administered in mockery and scorn and savage inhumanity, (though in unsuspected fulfilment of Prophecy,) when, in the depth of His Bodily Sufferings, He was at His almost latest Gasp; and with a Voice and Accent that, One should have thought, would have Excited pity even amongst His bitterest Persecutors, He Uttered, "*I Thirst*:" the fiercest pang of exhaust-

ig Nature: *Enduring all Things*; that All Things, Foretold of Him by the criptures, might be Fulfilled.

See the observations on Chapter x, 22.

As was the Doctrine of The MASTER, so was that of His Servants. Faith,  an enduring Faith, Obedience, and a continued Obedience, were inculcated, s the only Seed that would grow up and bear fruit unto Salvation: for the Writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, in drawing the comparison between *Moses as a Servant*, and *CHRIST, as The SON of GOD*, exults in considering s as the House, over which CHRIST, as The SON, had Power from The FATHER; but then he acknowledges that this boasted pre-eminence is ours nly on this condition, *if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope 'rm unto the end*: and then adds this truly Apostolic Admonition: *Take heed, 'rethren, lest there be in Any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from The Living GOD! but exhort One Another daily, while it is called "To Day," 'st Any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin! for we are Made 'artakers of CHRIST, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the nd.*—Heb. iii, 6. 12 to 14. Thus confirming the awful Truth that not Every me, that saith, "LORD!" "LORD!" shall enter into The KINGDOM of IEAVEN: and that they only, who are faithful in the employment of the alents Committed to them by The LORD, shall at His Coming rejoice in The OD of their Salvation. Many! very Many, alas! in time of temptation, fall way; but Such as trust, confidently, in The LORD, and in the Sufficiency of His Grace, will assuredly find Help in every time of need.

But persecution is not the only, nor the most powerful weapon of Satan, rith which we have to encounter. In his seductions through the weakness and rility of our flesh, in lust and sensuality, in pride and covetousness, though rished in the madness of our infatuation to our inevitable and interminable isery and ruin, are found the most successful darts of our subtle and implacable nemy: and if these be not resisted, and resisted unto the end, by the instantly uplicated Shield of Faith and Breast-plate of Righteousness, with the Helmet f Salvation, and The Sword of The SPIRIT, Which is The Word of GOD, they ill pierce to the very dividing asunder our Immortal Souls from Everlasting 'eace and Fulness of Joy.

Widely as have been diffused The *Tidings of Great Joy, Which should be unto U People*, by the Promulgation of The Gospel of Peace, in the Renewal of OD'S Mysterious Love towards His Creature Man, through the Intercessory acifice of His Only Begotten SON, yet are there still Regions, which They ave to reach. And what is of nearer and far dearer interest to Ourselves, here are yet many parts of our own hearts, over which the Influence of That blessed Gospel has not been suffered to Extend, or Bear undivided or undisputed way. GOD Grant, for His Precious SON'S Sake, that the End may not over-ake us, ere The KINGDOM of That SON Reigneth in our hearts, by the Efficacy of His Preaching being Manifest in our practice and in our habits of ife and conversation, by conforming ourselves to His Doctrines, and striving to mitate His Example, that we may be living Witnesses, in the Nation or Community wherein we live and move, of the just confidence of the Christian's hope, hen resting in faith on the Righteousness of CHRIST, and on The Tender 'ericy of GOD towards us through Him! To a Soul thus prepared the End ay Come; and It will Bring with It that Peace, which passeth understanding, nd it will be followed by that Joy, which no Man taketh away; but which will e Eternal in Heavenly Places and in Holy Communion. [See observations on Chapter iv, 23, and ix, 35.] The universal spread of the Gospel was foretold y the holy David, Ps. xix, 4, and is thus adverted to by St. Paul: *Have they*

not heard? *Yea, verily, Their Sound Went into all the Earth, and Their Words unto the ends of the World.*—Rom. x, 18. But the Appointment of Times and of Seasons is with The LORD; with Whom a thousand years are as one day; and Who Alone Knoweth the fit time for the Gathering in the Harvest of the World. To us it is enough to know that the End will assuredly come, and that it will not tarry; and it is sufficient ground for our Spiritual rejoicing, that the End hath not come without our having been invited to hear and to receive into our hearts with gladness the Exceeding Precious Promises of The Gospel. However, eventually, interesting to us may be what is now in the womb of Futurity, the foreknowledge of it is not essential to our Salvation; and it behoves us not to murmur or complain at what is, doubtless, for the Wisest Purpose, Withheld from us in the Councils of The MOST HIGH. Sufficient for the day is the Bread of Spiritual Life, that is daily and Graciously Handed to us by The LORD of Life, if we will but eat Thereof and be thankful; with singleness and simplicity of heart going on our way, in the Strength thereof, through the pilgrimage of this Life, rejoicing that, when the End does come, we shall not hunger any more, or thirst any more, for the Revelation of Prophecy, or the Development of the Hitherto Hidden Secrets of The MOST HIGH.

In the expansive vision of St. Paul, he speaks of The Gospel of CHRIST as having come unto all the World: and in all the copiousness of Spiritual Language, and in all the warmth of Spiritual zeal, he thus expatiates upon It and Its Inestimable Value to All, who will in true faith receive It, in his Letter to the Colossian Converts: *We give thanks to GOD and The FATHER of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, praying always for you, since we heard of your faith in CHRIST JESUS, and of the love, which ye have to all the Saints, for the Hope, which is Laid up for you in Heaven; whereof ye heard before in the Word of the Truth of The Gospel, Which is Come unto you, as It is in all the World, and Bringeth forth Fruit; as It doth also in you, since the day ye heard of It, and knew the Grace of GOD in Truth: as ye also learned of Epaphras, our dear Fellow-Servant, who is for you a faithful Minister of CHRIST; who also declared unto us your love in The SPIRIT. For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of His Will in all Wisdom and Spiritual Understanding, that ye might walk worthy of The LORD unto all pleasing; being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of GOD; Strengthened with all might, according to His Glorious Power, unto all patience and long suffering with joyfulness: giving thanks unto The FATHER, Which hath Made us meet to be Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light: Who hath Delivered us from the power of Darkness; and hath Translated us into The KINGDOM of His Dear SON; in Whom we have Redemption through His Blood, even the Forgiveness of sins; Who is The Image of The Invisible GOD; The FIRST-BORN of every Creature. For it Pleased The FATHER that in Him should All Fullness Dwell: and having Made Peace through the Blood of His Cross, by Him to Reconcile all Things unto Himself. And you, that were sometime alienated and Enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He Reconciled, in the Body of His Flesh through death, to present you Holy and unblameable and Unreprovable in His Sight; if ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of The Gospel, Which ye have heard; and Which was Preached to every Creature which is under Heaven.*—Col. i, 3 to 15. 19 to 23.

False Preachers, as well as lying Prophets, have been the great Stumbling Block in the way of weak-minded and hollow-hearted Christians in all ages. St. Paul thus designates them in his first Letter to Timothy: *The end of the Commandment* (he writes,) *is Charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience,*

*and of faith unfeigned: from which Some, having swerved, have turned aside unto vain jangling; desiring to be Teachers of the Law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.*—1 Tim. i, 5 to 7. By the Rules of The Gospel Law, the true Prophet and Preacher will be assuredly distinguished from the false Ones. Let That, therefore, be studiously our Guide, and The HOLY SPIRIT'S Light be sought for in unfeigned prayer, to interpret It at all times aright, and in perfect Accordance with the Will and Purpose of JESUS CHRIST, The Great and Merciful FOUNDER of That Gospel Law, and The AUTHOR and FINISHER of all Saving Faith in It!

When ye, therefore, shall see the abomination of Desolation, spoken of by Daniel, the Prophet, stand in the Holy Place (Whoso readeth let him understand)! Then let them, which be in Judea, flee into the Mountains! let him, which is on the house top, not come down to take any thing out of his house! neither let him, which is in the field, return back to take his clothes! And woe unto them, that are with Child; and to them, that give suck in those days! But pray ye, that your flight be not in the Winter; neither on the Sabbath Day! For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the World to this Time; no! nor ever shall be! And except those days should be Shortened, there should no Flesh be Saved: but for the Elect's sake those Days shall be Shortened. Then if any Man shall say unto you, 'Lo, here is CHRIST! or there!' believe it not! For there shall arise false Christs and false Prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very Elect. Behold, I have Told you before: Wherefore, if they shall say unto you, 'Behold, He is in the Desert!' Go not forth! 'Behold, He is in the secret chambers!' Believe it not! For as the lightning cometh out of the East, and shineth even unto the West, so shall also the Coming of The SON of Man be! For whosoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together. Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the Sun be darkened; and the Moon shall not give her light, and the Stars shall fall from Heaven, and the Powers of the Heavens shall be shaken. And Then shall Appear The Sign of The SON of Man in Heaven: and Then shall all the Tribes of the Earth mourn: and they shall see The SON of Man Coming in the Clouds of HEAVEN with Power and Great Glory. And He shall Send His Angels with a great sound of a Trumpet; and they shall gather together His Elect from the four Winds, from one end of Heaven to the other."—15 to 31.

The Prophecy of Daniel here adverted to, is from the interpretation of his Vision by the Angel Gabriel; Where he, the Angel, says, "*Know and understand, that from the Going forth of the Commandment to Restore and to Build Jerusalem unto The MESSIAH, The PRINCE, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the Street shall be built again and the wall even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall MESSIAH be Cut off! but not for Himself. And the People of the Prince, that shall come, shall destroy the City and the Sanctuary: and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war Desolations are Determined. And He shall Confirm the Covenant with Many for one week: and in the midst of the week He shall Cause the Sacrifice and the Oblation to cease: and for the Overspreading of abominations He shall Make it desolate, even until the Consummation: and, That Determined, shall be Poured upon the Desolate:* [Dan. ix, 25 to 27.] and, in another place, a Supernatural Being addressing the Prophet, said, "*From the time, that the daily Sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination, that maketh desolate, set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.*"—Chap. xii, 11. And he adds, "*Blessed is he, that waiteth and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days! But* (applying to the Prophet he concluded thus encouragingly to him,) *go thou thy way till the end be; for thou shalt rest and stand in thy Lot at the end of the days!*"—12, 13.

St. Mark's description is as follows: "*But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the Prophet, standing where it ought not, (let*


him that readeth understand!) then let them, that be in Judea, flee to the Mountains; and let him, that is on the house top, not go down into the house, neither enter therein to take any thing out of his house; and let him, that is in the field, not turn back again for to take up his garment! But woe to them, that are with Child, and to them, that give suck in those days! And pray ye that your flight be not in the Winter! For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the Creation, which GOD Created, unto this time; neither shall be. And except that The LORD had Shortened those days, no Flesh should be Saved: but for the Elect's sake, whom He hath Chosen, He hath Shortened the Days. And then, if any Man shall say to you, 'Lo, here is CHRIST!' or, 'Lo, He is there.' believe him not! for false Christs and false Prophets shall rise; and shall shew signs and wonders to seduce, if it were possible, even the Elect. But take ye heed! Behold, I have Foretold you All Things! But in those days after that Tribulation, the Sun shall be darkened, and the Moon shall not give her light; and the Stars of Heaven shall fall; and the Powers, that are in Heaven, shall be shaken: and Then shall they see The SON of Man Coming in the Clouds with Great Power and Glory; and then shall He Send His Angels, and shall Gather together His Elect from the four Winds, from the uttermost part of the Earth to the uttermost part of Heaven."—Chap. xiii, 14 to 27.

The narrative by St. Luke is thus: "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with Armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh! Then let them, which are in Judea, flee to the Mountains; and let them, which are in the midst of it, depart out; and let not them, that are in the Countries, enter thereinto! For These be the Days of Vengeance, that All Things, Which are Written, may be Fulfilled. But woe unto them, that are with Child; and to them, that give suck in those days! for there shall be great distress in the Land, and Wrath upon this People, and they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all Nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the Times of the Gentiles be Fulfilled. And there shall be Signs in the Sun, and in the Moon, and in the Stars; and upon the Earth distress of Nations with perplexity, the Sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after Those Things, Which are Coming on the Earth; for the Powers of Heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see The SON of Man Coming in a Cloud with Power and Great Glory: And when These Things begin to Come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads! for your Redemption Draweth nigh."—Chap. xxi, 20 to 28.

△ To the Jews the Destruction of their own City, and the Dispersion of themselves as Exiles or Captives over the face of the Earth, in Exemplification of The DIVINE Displeasure at the Rejection of The MESSIAH, and their disregard of the Proffered Mercy of Pardon and Reconciliation through Him, so much and so exultingly their Prophets' Promise, were Insisted on by our SAVIOUR as best Calculated to arouse the feelings and apprehensions of His Auditors, and, through their fears, to awaken Some at least to a willingness to escape, by any Way That might be Pointed out by Him, from dangers so awful and so imminent. And thus yielding a ready belief to the Predictions, as Emanating from The SOURCE of TRUTH, Some sought by repentance and a lively faith in JESUS, as The MESSIAH, to save both their bodies and Souls alive amidst the wreck of the rebellious Nation; and thus was a Remnant of the Israelites Preserved. One might, indeed, have thought that even the apprehension that the Words of JESUS might Become Fulfilled, as His Works had Manifested a more than Human Power as well as Uniform and Surpassing Benevolence, and the deep dye of prejudice against the obtrusion of Heathen idolatry into the Very Sanctuary of their worship, would have influenced even the Majority of Them to

a calm hesitation at rejecting both The COUNSELLOR and His Counsel; and have led to a deliberate and sober inquiry into the tenor of their Prophetic Writings, that so haplessly they might not be found to be sinning against GOD. But though they had ears, they refused to hear, and though they could see, they refused to do so with the eyes of a teachable Spirit, and of an understanding heart. The Destruction of Jerusalem, when the abomination of Desolations stood in the Holy Place, it is true, happened at a period distant enough for Many, who had heard the Threatening Prediction of it, to have been Called to their great account without being Witnesses of it. But to what a Desolation would their Spirits have departed! Though they contributed, whilst in life, to harden the rising Generation against the reception of That, Which Belonged unto their peace; yet unto All the Record of our SAVIOUR'S Warnings Spake, and with Some, doubtlessly, Spake Effectually, so as to induce them to flee both from the Temporal and Spiritual Wrath to Come. To Such the Preparation of the Gospel of Peace, and the Gracious Means of Salvation were Inculcated by the Admonition when the hour of general calamity arrived, to leave that City Destined irretrievably to Destruction, and to seek for shelter in the recesses and fastnesses away from it, and that with such quickness as would allow of no delay for the removal of what might otherwise be deemed essential accompaniments. To the Gentile Convert, even of the present or future day, the Lesson may, in Spirit, be read, and with the most beneficial effect, if applied and laid to the heart: for both Prophets and Apostles declare, that our Bodies are the Earthly Temples of The HOLY GHOST, and thence capacitated, through faith in JESUS CHRIST, as The Atoning Sacrifice for sin, to receive Sanctification unto Communion with the Holiness and Happiness of Heaven. But the abomination of desolation is ever ready to rush in upon the faithless and unbelieving Soul: and, amidst the Threatening Inroad of Such dreadful and interminable Desolation, how can the Soul flee, with any confidence of hope, to JESUS as a Sure Refuge, if it have not before called upon His Name, or sought out Him to be its Everlasting Stay? having busied itself about many things to the neglect or rejection of The One Thing needful. To such Souls the devastation of Jerusalem, amidst its unparalleled Earthly distresses, will be but a faint image of the Awfulness of the Desolation Terminating in despair, and in a famine of the Grace of GOD, and of the Glories Awaiting the Redeemed in CHRIST JESUS.

Distressing as is the situation of every One amidst general confusion, yet is that, in a peculiar degree, so of a fond Mother, who has the Child of her bosom to protect in its deeper helplessness; and who, therefore, is torn by two-fold agony. But poignant as must be the feelings, and keen as the anguish of a Parent, tenderly attached, and herself without resource amidst the impending ruin; yet if she have been one of the Daughters of Indiscretion, and have not had GOD in all her thoughts, awful, indeed, must be her trial, and fearful her forebodings, when the experience of the extreme of Earthly misery will only be the pathway to a sorrow of unmeasurably deeper bitterness, and a woe that can know no alleviation and no end!

In the Interval between the Condemnation and Crucifixion of The HOLY  JESUS, amidst the Sufferings that then assailed His Body, and the far more afflicting Passion of His Soul, the Same Emphatic and Expressive Illustration of the fate that was suspended over Jerusalem, and which would be Visited upon it for its apostacy, was thus Uttered by Him, when, *as they led Him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the Country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after JESUS: and there followed Him a great Company of People, and of Women, which also bewailed and lamented Him. But JESUS, Turning unto them, Said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for Me!*

*But weep for yourselves and for your Children! For, behold, the Days are coming, in the which they shall say, 'Blessed are the Barren, and the Wombs that never bare, and the Paps which never gave suck!'*"—Luke xxiii, 26 to 29.

The Calamity, thus Predicted, is sufficient, without any attendant circumstances of aggravation, to fill the stoutest heart with dread, and influence it to put forth a prayer, though, perhaps, for the first time, not to have the cup of misery filled to the overflow in its day. To the Christian it also belongs both to watch and to pray that the Sudden Destruction, Which will Come as a whirlwind, do not overtake him, unless he be prepared by Gospel Influence even to welcome Its Approach.

The Visitation of DIVINE Chastisement on Jerusalem, had long before been proclaimed by DIVINE Injunction through the Prophet Daniel; predicting also The Simultaneous Coming of The MESSIAH: *At that time shall Michael stand up, The Great PRINCE, Which Standeth for the Children of Thy People: and there shall be a Time of Trouble, Such as never was since there was a Nation, even to that same time: and at that Time thy People shall be Delivered, every One, that shall be Found Written in the Book: and Many of them, that sleep in the dust of the Earth, shall awake; Some to Everlasting Life, and Some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they, that be wise, shall shine as the brightness of the Firmament; and they, that turn Many to Righteousness, as the Stars for ever and ever.*—Dan. xii, 1 to 3.

Terrible as are the Outpourings of The DIVINE Displeasure, yet are They, in every Instance, but too justly incurred: and happy, indeed, may they esteem themselves, whatever be their measure of suffering or experience of trial in this Life, if, by faith and patience, they let not go their hold upon Eternal Life, looking to the Bosom of JESUS as The Haven of their Everlasting Rest! How utterly insignificant will then seem the longest life of suffering, or of persecution, when the Day-dawn of Endless Happiness, in the Fulness of Heavenly Perfection, shall Open on the Immortal and Sanctified Soul!

The prevalence of war and famine and pestilence and plague, if spread over the World, would rapidly exterminate its Human Inhabitants: but in His Judgments GOD Thinketh upon Mercy; and is Willing to Save All, that will truly turn unto Him. For Such, on whom the Rod of Chastisement Worketh repentance not to be repented of, doth He Stay the further Infliction of His Vengeance, and Remembereth their iniquity no more: but Bidding the Winds and the Waves of Desolation and Destruction be still, He Bringeth them to the Haven, where they would be, in the Assurance of Peace, and in the Promise of Everlasting Rest. Forbearance in DIVINE Mercy must have Its bounds; but, on the other hand, DIVINE Justice is Satisfied by the Accepted Mediation of CHRIST; and DIVINE Favour will Return, for His Sake, to Such as manifest a real and vital faith in the Necessity and Sufficiency of His Sacrificial Intercession; and to them shall be Given not only Pardon, but Reconciliation, and Sanctification unto the Holiness and Happiness of Heaven, by the Imparted Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT. For our own Immortal Soul's sake, therefore, and for the Souls of Those, who are most near and dear to us by the ties of affinity or affection, let us strive, in Christian charity, to make the Gospel of CHRIST the Foundation of hope, that the profession of faith may be firm, and that its constancy may be evidenced under every vicissitude or trial of Life: *for the Arm of The LORD is not Shortened, that He cannot Save, neither is His Ear Heavy, that He cannot Hear:* but upon them, that call upon Him faithfully, will CHRIST'S Intercession have Operated Effectually, and we and they may be Saved amongst the Remnant of the true Israelites, having one Hope and one Calling with them.

Through The SPIRIT, in Allusion to the Visitation of Calamities on the Jews for their denial of The MESSIAH, was it proclaimed by the Prophet Zechariah, *Behold, The Day of The LORD Cometh; and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee! For I will Gather all Nations against Jerusalem to battle: and the City shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the Women ravished, and half of the City shall go forth into captivity; and the residue of the People shall not be cut off from the City!*—Chap. xiv, 1, 2.

It is by temptation that the trial of faith is usually made. Of him, who, like St. Paul, is grounded and built up in CHRIST, neither persecution, nor suffering, neither threatening, nor torment, nor death itself, in its most appalling approaches, can shake the constancy, nor loose his hold on The ROCK of Salvation: whatever fatalities in the Physical or Natural Influence are experienced within or around him, he bows even with the cheerfulness of content to The DIVINE Dispensations; enduring all things for the sake of That Crown of Glory, Which awaits Those, who in faith and patience possess their Souls, enduring unto the end, and who are Found to be CHRIST'S at His Coming. But dreadful, indeed, will be That Coming, whether in temporal or eternal Judgment, to Them, who, in time of temptation, fall away; and, like the faithless and infatuated Israelites, murmur at the absence of temporal consequence and objects of worldly ambition. Every One, who thus casts from him the Consolations of The HOLY SPIRIT, as the First Fruits of the Love of The SON of GOD, virtually feeds upon ashes, and, without satisfying his hunger after solid happiness in this Life, insures his experience of the famine of the Soul in that which is to come: though the Days of The ALMIGHTY'S Wrath may be Shortened on Earth, yet where may Their End be hoped for in Eternity? For though the Impenitent and Unbelieving may be Permitted, perhaps, to outlive the desolations around them, yet if they repent not, and seek not by humility and supplication and a lively faith in JESUS to be Brought within the Pale of Salvation, the Day of Futurity will open upon the closing scene of their Lives here, and bring down on their Spirit, then convinced of the Truth, as it is in The Gospel Displayed, a bitterness of Woe, Which the eye had not before seen, nor the heart contemplated: and though such will then be the beginning of sorrows, where will be the ray of hope, that they will experience any cessation or relief? Who will compose the Elect, it is not for Man to say; for no One knoweth the heart, out of which are the Issues of Life and Death, as in reality either cherishing or rejecting that faith, on which Acceptance or Rejection by CHRIST depends. May it be our daily prayer, that we may be Blest with the Assurance of DIVINE Favour both in Time and Eternity, through an unfeigned faith in the Expiatory Sacrifice and Meritorious Offering of The SON of GOD! And may we remember the Declaration from OMNISCIENCE, that though *Many are Called, but Few are Chosen!* And that *not Every One, that saith*, in an outward profession of obedience to that Call, "*LORD!*" "*LORD!*" *shall enter into The KINGDOM of HEAVEN.* For the poor, penitent, Self-condemning Publican, who sought only for Mercy, obtained It; when the Self-approving, and righteousness-avowing Pharisee failed of experiencing It: thus manifesting the fallacy of Human judgment, when attempting to penetrate and, still less, to controul the Councils of The MOST HIGH. The Election of His Creatures by The SAVIOUR of The World, and to Whom all Judgment is Committed, we may be fully satisfied does and will Proceed on the Immutable Principles of Wisdom and Truth. Let us not trust in our own righteousness, nor imagine that the profession of faith will deceive The OMNISCIENT if we have it not in singleness of heart. GOD Knoweth them, that are His; and thus, whom He Fore-knows, it may be considered, He Predestinates. But though Salvation is of



CHRIST Alone, yet the Efficacy of That Mediation is of the fruit of Imparted Faith, best manifested by obedience to the Revealed Will of GOD, as Communicated in His Word, or Prompted by His SPIRIT. To be *Called*, therefore, is not necessarily to be *Chosen*, as is signally instanced in the Apostate Judas. So also in Balaam, for *with him was The SPIRIT of The MOST HIGH GOD*; but though he proclaimed the Truth as a Prophet of The LORD, he lent himself to work evil in the ways of Men. Let None presume on their own strength, lest they fall into the devices of Satan!

In the hour of general distress All cry out for help; and Such as have not known CHRIST, nor been Baptized with The HOLY GHOST, and who have not circumcised their hearts, will seek for Salvation from an arm of Flesh, which cannot save. Pride and Superstition may then put forth their pretensions to Mastery, and the Weak in Grace, through folly and perversion of heart, may, for a while, trust therein, and yield themselves up to such blind and misleading guidance, unmindful of Him, Who is Alone OMNIPOTENT, and disclaiming JESUS, The ROCK of Salvation. But let us not, under any circumstances of Individual trial, or of distress of Nations, cast off our faith in JEHOVAH or our allegiance to CHRIST, as our KING, since *there is none other Name under Heaven whereby we can be Saved. Try the Spirits, whether they be of Men, or of GOD! Every Spirit, that confesseth not that JESUS CHRIST is Come in the Flesh, is not born of GOD*; but is of the Devil! [1 John iv, 1 to 4.]

These Predictions of our SAVIOUR have been already Verified. But unhappily the Spirit of Infidelity and of false Prophecy hath not as yet been bound. Mahometanism, and Papacy, Unitarianism, and Polytheism have had their Votaries and prevailed through a succession of centuries in the World, and either by the subtlety of their doctrine, the terror of their power, or the allurements of their pageantry, and the prevalence of superstition, have well nigh shook the belief of Many, who, without such incentives to separation, might have gone on in the paths of sobriety and meekness and conformity to the pure and perfect Faith, as It is in the full Light of Gospel Dispensation. What our SAVIOUR here Cautioned against, had been by the Mosaic Law enjoined not to be done. *If there arise among you a Prophet or a Dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder come to pass, whosoever he spake unto thee, saying, "Let us go after other gods, and let us serve them!" Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that Prophet or that Dreamer of dreams; for The LORD, your GOD, Proveth you, to Know whether ye love The LORD, your GOD, with all your heart and with all your Soul.*—Deut. xiii, 1 to 3.

△ The object in Permitting false doctrine and false Teachers is thus Proclaimed by GOD Himself to be, that of trying the faith of Such, as profess to be His Servants, that He may be Glorified by Such as have proved themselves in act, as well as in will, to be Saints and Martyrs for the honour of His Name. St. Paul declared that, in his day, *the mystery of iniquity did work*, and that for a Season it was Foreordained that it should do so, until it shall be Taken out of the way, when (the Apostle adds,) *that Wicked shall be Revealed, whom The LORD shall Consume with The Spirit of His Mouth, and shall Destroy with the Brightness of His Coming; even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders; and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them, that perish: because they receive not the Love of The Truth, that they might be Saved. And for this cause GOD shall Send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be Damned, who believed not The Truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*—2 Thess. ii, 7 to 12.

Let, us, by penitence and prayer and in the fulness of faith in the Efficacy of CHRIST'S Mediation, seek to have our hearts, by the Grace of The HOLY

SPIRIT, Set right with GOD; and let Him be our Trust, and let Him be our Fear! and then need we not fear what Man can do unto us. But if we foolishly rely on ourselves and on our own imagined righteousness, our utmost strength will be found very weakness, and our pride must be the occasion of our fall. Among the Revelations Made to St. John, the same Deceivableness in matters both of faith and practice is thus figuratively as well as Prophetically Portrayed: *I beheld another Beast coming up out of the Earth; and he had two horns like a lamb; and he spake as a dragon: and he exerciseth all the power of the first Beast before him; and causeth the Earth, and them which dwell therein, to worship the first Beast, whose deadly wound was healed; and he doth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from Heaven on the Earth in the sight of Men; and deceiveth them, that dwell on the Earth by the means of those miracles, which he had power to do in the sight of the Beast.*—Rev. xiii, 11 to 14. But this alarming Picture of the prevalence of evil is introduced by a representation of the Consolation and Protection awaiting the faithful Servants of The True LAMB of GOD: *If any Man have an ear, let him hear! He, that leadeth into captivity, shall go into captivity: he, that killeth with the sword, must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the Saints.*—Rev. xiii, 9, 10.

Happily it is not possible that the Elect should be deceived to their destruction; for The LORD hath Surrounded them, by the Power of His Grace, for the Sake of His SON; Thus Forming for them That Barrier, Which, with all his wiles and subtlety, the Devil is unable to surmount. For the Voice of Truth Itself, in The Incarnate GOD CHRIST JESUS, hath Declared, "*All that The FATHER Giveth Me shall come to Me: and him, that cometh to Me, I will in no wise Cast out: for I Came down from Heaven, not to Do Mine Own Will, but the Will of Him, That Sent Me: and This is The FATHER'S Will, Which hath Sent Me, That of All, which He hath Given Me, I should Lose nothing; but should Raise it up again at the Last Day. And This is the Will of Him, That Sent Me, That Every One, which seeth The SON, and believeth on Him, may have Everlasting Life. And I will Raise him up at the Last Day.*"—John vi, 37 to 40. And Again, "*MY Sheep hear My Voice; and I Know them; and they follow Me: and I Give unto them Eternal Life: and they shall never perish; neither shall any Man pluck them out of My Hand! My FATHER, Which Gave them Me, is Greater than All: and no Man is able to pluck them out of My FATHER'S Hand! I and My FATHER are ONE.*"—John x, 27 to 30. And St. Paul hath declared that *We know that All Things work together for Good to Them, that love GOD; to them, who are The Called according to His Purpose: for whom He did Foreknow, He also did Predestinate to be Conformed to the Image of His SON, that He might be The FIRST-BORN among many Brethren: Moreover Whom He did Predestinate, them He also Called; and whom He Called, them He also Justified: and whom He Justified, them He also Glorified:* (and the Apostle then thus reasons,) *What shall we then say to these things? If GOD Be for us, who can be against us? HE, That Spared not His Own SON, but Delivered Him up for us All, how shall He not, with Him, also Freely Give us All Things?*—Rom. viii, 28 to 32. And to our further consolation is it, by the same Apostle, said, *The Foundation of GOD Standeth Sure, Having This Seal, "The LORD knoweth them that are His."*—2 Tim. ii, 19.

Thus the true Servants of GOD and Followers of The LAMB, will stand triumphant over all Enemies to their faith, resting their defence on the Arm of JEHOVAH; and trying all things and all Characters by The SPIRIT, with Whom and from Whom, through JESUS CHRIST, are Wisdom and Knowledge and Truth and Power and Victory.

The Second Advent of The SON of GOD will, we are sure, be with Power 

and Great Glory; and though the hour of His Coming no Man knoweth; no, not even the Angels in Heaven: yet to every One is Offered, with an Unsparing Hand, of the Fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of His First Advent, on Which the Sustenance of the Soul depends. And they, that will eat of It with thankfulness, shall also, when the Second Advent does Arrive, eat of the Fruit of the Tree of Life Eternal: With the first Fruit will The HOLY SPIRIT of GOD Abundantly Supply us, if we ask for It in faith through CHRIST, nothing doubting: and we shall then know how to choose the good, and avoid the evil; for we shall be among the Elect in Grace, having the Assurance of the hope of Salvation, and being Made meet Partakers of That Holiness, without which no One shall see GOD and live; and being fitted to join the Communion of Saints in the Presence of The LAMB, their REDEEMER and their JUDGE. What our SAVIOUR Declared to His Disciples, is happily Communicated to us; and the Book of the Word of GOD, Laid open, as It is, before us, needs only to be read with singleness and simplicity of heart, and the Unction of The SPIRIT to be asked for in prayer sufficiently to Interpret It to our comprehension, for us to discover the Way That Leadeth to Everlasting Rest. As the Second Coming of Mankind's REDEEMER will be with universal Demonstration, even as the Lightning flashing over the whole habitable Globe, so should His First Coming into the heart of every One of us be with demonstration of the Fruits of The SPIRIT; and our Light, Which CHRIST, The SUN of Righteousness, hath Communicated to us, should be reflected around us, and so shine before Men, that they may, for the accordance of our life with our faith, glorify our FATHER, Which is in Heaven, and JESUS CHRIST, The SON. To shrink from all intercourse with our Fellow-Creatures, to retire to the solitude of the Desert, or to the seclusion of our secret chambers, otherwise than occasionally so to abstract ourselves that we may hold high converse with our GOD, and to fit and prepare ourselves, by the supplicated Aid of DIVINE Grace, for the Spiritual warfare in which we must engage, under The Great CAPTAIN of our Salvation, against the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, is to mistake the Spirit of Christianity. Dreadful, indeed, will be to Such as shall be living, when The SON of Man doth Come again in His Visible Presence, if they shall have lived without GOD in the World! And not less dreadful must be the approach of Death to them, who have equally slighted the Mercies, the Warnings, the Encouragements, and the Threatenings of The LORD of Life!

*"Whosoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together."* In the Challenges of The ALMIGHTY to Job, among the Instances of the Wonders of Creation Adduced to Shew the Greatness of The CREATOR, and Expose the weakness of Man, the afflicted Mourner is Asked, *"Doth the eagle mount up at thy command, and make her nest on high? she dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon the crag of the rock, and the strong place: from thence she seeketh the prey; and her eyes behold afar off: her young ones also suck up blood; and where the Slain are, there is she."*—Job xxxix, 27 to 30. Thus forcibly are illustrated the rapacity and eagerness which Man, with all his boasted superiority of attainments, can neither subdue nor controul.

△ To the uninstructed mind the unexpected appearance of the Sun's eclipse, even for the continuance of a small portion of a day, is calculated and has been found to occasion considerable agitation and perplexity: so would the unbroken prevalence of night throughout one week, fill every mind with dismay and apprehension, that was not fortified with faith. But a Darkness in the train of the terrors of plague, pestilence, famine, and the sword, so deep as to be felt, when the Sun will withdraw its shining, and the Stars fall from their courses, and the whole frame of Creation will give way, will attend That Vast and

Mighty Change: and then what Human Soul but shall be petrified with fear, unless having had the Christian's faith and patience, it shall then have the hope of the Saints' Rest. And yet how is the condition of them, that go on still in their iniquities and dying in their sins, different from that, in point of horror and despair, when their change cometh. If difference there be, it must be that of horror and despair in an aggravated degree, since not only will Earth to them have closed for ever its attractions, but Hell will be yawning to receive them. Magnificent as seems the description given by the Prophet Daniel of the Final Triumph of our LORD and SAVIOUR over sin and Death, and Terrible as is that of the Chastisement Inflicted on His Enemies, yet do they, probably, fall inconceivably short of What will be Realized in each. *I beheld, (says the Prophet, in his description of his Vision,) till the Thrones were cast down, and The ANCIENT of Days did Sit, Whose Garment was white as snow, and the Hair of His Head like the pure wool: His Throne was like the Fiery Flame, and His Wheels as Burning Fire: a Fiery Stream issued and came forth from before Him: Thousand Thousands ministered unto Him; and Ten Thousand times Ten Thousand stood before Him: The Judgment was Set; and the Books were Opened! I beheld then, because of the voice of the great words, which the Horn spake: I beheld even till the Beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the Burning Flame.—Dan. vii, 9 to 11.*

The Prophecy of Isaiah, allusive to the same great Event, though of a nearer resemblance to the Text, is yet, perhaps, but an equally faint shadow of the Reality: *Howl ye, (saith that Prophet,) for The Day of The LORD is at hand! It shall Come as a Destruction from The ALMIGHTY! Therefore shall all hands be faint; and every Man's heart shall melt; and they shall be afraid: pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them; they shall be in pain as a Woman that travaileth; they shall be amazed One at Another; their faces shall be as flames. Behold, The Day of The LORD Cometh, Cruel both with Wrath and fierce Anger, to Lay the Land desolate; and He shall Destroy the Sinners thereof out of it: for the Stars of Heaven, and the Constellations thereof shall not give their light; the Sun shall be darkened in his going forth; and the Moon shall not cause her light to shine. And I will Punish the World for their evil, and the Wicked for their iniquity: and I will Cause the arrogancy of the Proud to cease, and will Lay low the haughtiness of the Terrible. Therefore I will Shake the Heavens; and the Earth shall remove out of her place, in the Wrath of The LORD of Hosts, and in the Day of His fierce Anger.—Chap. xiii, 6 to 11. 13.*

The Prophet Ezekiel too, in his denunciation of DIVINE Vengeance against the Land of Egypt, (put figuratively, perhaps, for every Land of Wickedness and Infidelity,) useth the same materials for his description: *"When I shall Put thee out, I will Cover the Heaven, and Make the Stars thereof dark: I will Cover the Sun with a Cloud; and the Moon shall not give her light. All the bright Lights of Heaven will I Make dark over thee; and Set Darkness upon thy Land," Saith The LORD GOD.—Chap. xxxii, 7, 8.*

The same figure of expression also runs through the Prophecy of Joel, relative to the Same Awful Destiny, the Judgment of The ALMIGHTY against the Earth: *"Blow ye the trumpet in Zion; and sound an alarm in My Holy Mountain! Let All the Inhabitants of the Land tremble! For The Day of The LORD Cometh; for It is Nigh at hand: A Day of Darkness and of Gloominess; a Day of Clouds and of thick Darkness. The Earth shall quake; the Heavens shall tremble; the Sun and the Moon shall be dark; and the Stars shall withdraw their shining: And The LORD shall Utter His Voice before His Army: for His Camp is very great: for He is Strong, That Executeth His Word: for the Day of The LORD is Great, and very Terrible! And who can abide It? I will Shew*

*Wonders in the Heavens and in the Earth; Blood, and Fire, and Pillars of Smoke; the Sun shall be Turned into Darkness, and the Moon into Blood, before the Great and the Terrible Day of The LORD Come.*—Chap. ii, 1, 2, 10, 11, 30, 31. See also Acts ii, 16 to 21, where these verses are quoted by St. Peter, in his Sermon at Jerusalem, after the Outpouring of The HOLY GHOST. And Again, *The Day of The LORD is Near in the Valley of Decision: the Sun and the Moon shall be darkened; and the Stars shall withdraw their shining: The LORD also shall Roar out of Zion, and Utter His Voice from Jerusalem; and the Heavens and the Earth shall shake.*—Joel iii, 14 to 16. But (the Prophet adds, to the consolation of all Saints,) *THE LORD will be The Hope of His People.*—v. 16. *Woe unto you,* (in like manner saith Another of the Minor Prophets,) *that desire the Day of The LORD! To what end is It for you? The Day of The LORD is Darkness, and not Light! Shall not the Day of The LORD be Darkness, and not Light? even very dark, and no Brightness in It?*—Amos v, 18, 20. And by the same Prophet is it thus declared as the Decision of The MOST HIGH: *"It shall come to pass in That Day, (of Lamentation.) Saith The LORD GOD, that I will Cause the Sun to go down at noon, and I will Darken the Earth in the clear day."*—Amos viii, 9. And in the Revelations to St. John, the Same Figurative Style is Observed: *I beheld when The LAMB had Opened the Sixth Seal; and lo! there was a great Earthquake; and the Sun became black as sack-cloth of hair; and the Moon became as blood; and the Stars of Heaven fell unto the Earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.*—Rev. vi, 12, 13.

△ In That Day of The LORD, inconceivably great will be the anguish of them, who are not Found to be His at His Coming, and on whom The SUN of Righteousness will Arise, but not with Healing on His Wings. The sun of sensual indulgence will then set for ever; and will be succeeded by a night of endless remorse and despair; with no moon to emit one ray of consolation, no stars to twinkle in a firmament of hope. The Power with Which The REDEEMER of the Faithful will then be Clothed, is thus Portrayed by The SPIRIT of Prophecy: *I saw in the night Visions, and, behold, ONE, like The SON of Man Came with the Clouds of Heaven, and Came to The ANCIENT of Days; and they brought Him near before Him. And there was Given Him Dominion and Glory and A KINGDOM, that all People and Nations and Languages should serve Him: His Dominion is an Everlasting Dominion, Which shall not Pass away; and His KINGDOM That, Which shall not be destroyed.*—Dan. vii, 13, 14. The Same SPIRIT of Prophecy, in reference to the Coming of The KINGDOM of CHRIST, and the Manifestation of His Universal SOVEREIGNTY, Saith, *"It shall come to Pass in That Day, that I will Seek to Destroy all the Nations, that come against Jerusalem; and I will Pour upon the House of David, and upon the Inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of Grace and of Supplications: and they shall look upon Me, Whom they have pierced; and they shall mourn for Him, as One that mourneth for his only Son; and shall be in bitterness for Him, as One that is in bitterness for his First-Born. In That Day the Land shall mourn."*—Zech. xii, 9, 10, 12. [See the observations on Chapter xvi, 27, where is a Passage of similar tendency to the Text.] In the Revelations to St. John by The Same SPIRIT, it is Declared: *Behold, He (JESUS CHRIST) Cometh with Clouds; and every Eye shall see Him; and they also, which pierced Him: and all Kindreds of the Earth shall wail because of Him! Even so! Amen.*—Rev. i, 7. Can any sorrow of heart be equal to that sorrow, which shall then overwhelm the Impenitent and Reprobate! How unfathomably deep will be their Self-condemnation! How piercing, to the very dividing asunder of both Body and Soul, will be the reflection of having pierced Him, Whose

Favour alone can Save; and Whose Frown is utter and irretrievable Destruction! Let us, like the wise Virgins in the Parable, prepare for the Lamp of our Body, which is the Soul, That Oil, Which is an Unction from The HOLY ONE; being the Graces of meekness and penitence, of devotional love and obedience, against the Marriage of The LAMB and His Bride, the Church! and let our feet be shod with the Preparation of The Gospel of Peace; that when The Great and Terrible Day of The LORD shall Come, we may not mourn as they, who will then be without hope: but being Upheld by The SON of GOD Himself, with the Consolations of The SPIRIT, may be not only able to abide It, but may rejoice in It as Full of the Promise of Eternal Glory!

How full of occasion for rejoicing, though with trembling, is the Assurance that The HOLY JESUS, having All Power Given unto Him, will not Confine the Exercise of It to the Infliction of Vengeance on His Enemies, (and who, alas! among the numberless Sons of Men, has not, in a greater or less degree, proved himself hostile to the Principles, if not to the PERSON of The PRINCE of Peace, opposing His Influence, resisting His Decrees, or rejecting His Proffered Blessings?) but will Extend It to the Everlasting Salvation of Those, who, through repentance, have in faith come unto Him. Of Such will a Glorious Assemblage be formed, Elected from all Generations of the Earth, from the First-born Adam to his latest Posterity, on whom both the Work of Redemption and Sanctification will be Wrought, and on whom the Everlasting Favour of The ALMIGHTY will Rest, through the Reconciliation Effected by CHRIST'S Mediation. How ineffably Sweet to the Sanctified Soul will be the Sound of the Last Trump, Which shall Call it to an union with the Body in its then Glorified state, and to a participation in the Pure and Perfect Delights of Heaven, in communion with Angels and Saints, and, above all, in the contemplation and experience of the Love of CHRIST; being itself Purified even unto the perfection of Holiness, through the Ingrafted Graces of The HOLY SPIRIT, Which will then Belong to it. [See the observations on Chapter xiii. 41 to 43.] In that Inspired illustration of the Resurrection given by St. Paul, the same figure of the Trumpet-summons is used, where he says, *Behold, I shew you a Mystery, We shall not All sleep; but we shall All be Changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the Last Trump! For the Trumpet shall Sound, and the Dead shall be Raised Incorruptible; and we shall be Changed.*—1 Cor. xv, 51, 52. And again, *I would not have you to be ignorant, Brethren, concerning them, which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as Others which have no hope; for if we believe that JESUS Died and Rose again; even so Them also, which sleep in JESUS, will GOD Bring with Him. For The LORD Himself shall Descend from Heaven with a Shout, with the voice of the Arch-Angel, and with the Trump of GOD! And the Dead in CHRIST shall Rise first: then (the Apostle triumphantly adds,) we, which are alive and remain, shall be Caught up together with them in the clouds to meet The LORD in the Air; and so shall we ever be with The LORD.* A Prospect and a Promise (as in effect he adds,) full of the most enduring Consolation to the Faithful [1 Thess. iv, 13, 14. 16 to 18]. And in furtherance of our salutary reflections on this awakening Truth, the same Apostle adds, what hath been before in part referred to, but which can never be too strongly impressed upon our minds: *Of the Times and the Seasons, Brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you; for yourselves know perfectly that The Day of The LORD so Cometh, as a Thief in the night; for when they shall say, "Peace! and Safety!" then sudden Destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a Woman with Child; and they shall not escape! But ye, Brethren, are not in darkness, that That Day should overtake you as a Thief: ye are all the Children of Light, and the Children of the Day: we are not of the Night, nor of Darkness: therefore let us not sleep, as*

*do Others; but let us watch and be sober! For they, that sleep, sleep in the night; and they, that be drunken, are drunken in the night! But let us, who are of the Day, be sober; putting on the breast-plate of faith and love, and for an helmet the hope of Salvation! For GOD hath not Appointed us to Wrath; but to Obtain Salvation by our LORD JESUS CHRIST, Who Died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify One Another!—1 Thess. v, 1 to 11.*

△ "Now learn a Parable of the fig-tree! When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that Summer is nigh. So likewise ye, when ye shall see All These Things, know that It is near, even at the doors! Verily, I Say unto you, This Generation shall not pass, till All These Things be Fulfilled! Heaven and Earth shall pass away; but My Words shall not Pass away! But of That Day and Hour knoweth no Man; no, not the Angels of Heaven; but My FATHER only! But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the Coming of The SON of Man be: for as in the days that were before the Flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the Ark, and knew not until the Flood came, and took them All away; so shall also The Coming of The SON of Man be! Then shall Two be in the field; the One shall be taken, and the Other left! Two Women shall be grinding at the Mill; the One shall be taken, and the Other left! Watch therefore! for ye know not What Hour your LORD doth Come! But know this, that if the good Man of the house had known in what watch the Thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready! For in such an Hour, as ye think not, The SON of Man Cometh. Who, then, is a faithful and wise Servant, whom his Lord hath made Ruler over his Household to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that Servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing! Verily, I Say unto you, That he shall make him Ruler over all his goods. But and if that evil Servant shall say in his heart, 'My Lord delayeth his coming;' and shall begin to smite his Fellow-Servants, and to eat and drink with the Drunken, the Lord of that Servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the Hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."—32 to 51.

Forceful and impressive is instruction conveyed by natural images of Things Spiritual; and the more the Objects of Creation are traced and reflected on, the more of their CREATOR'S Wisdom and Power and Goodness shall we not only discover, but shall find them beautifully illustrative as well as figurative of the Spiritual World, and of His Gracious Government and Regulation Thereof; bearing in mind that He is The FATHER of Spirits; and that from Him All Things, both visible and invisible Proceed. When The SON of GOD, as ONE with The FATHER and The HOLY SPIRIT, being LORD of Heaven and Earth, Visibly Appeared in the Graciously Adopted form of Man, to Regain for Man The DIVINE Favour, Which had been so justly and generally forfeited, He Preached the Gospel of Peace, Taking His Texts or Subjects usually from the Objects of Creation, as they were at the moment presented to His Notice, whether animate or inanimate, and thence Poured forth the Copious and Refreshing Streams of Edification in Matters essentially Affecting our Everlasting Interests, Expounding Things Spiritual by Things Natural. In the Instance before us, a subject of vegetation is Selected, from the observance of the varying appearances of it, whence Mankind habitually calculated on the change of seasons in the year; and by a similitude of reasoning, strictly and beautifully applicable and equally infallible, is the Spirit of Man known by its fruits. So when a foresight of the Influence of DIVINE Justice and Judgment had been present to the heart, the knowledge of Their Eventual Visitation would be cherished as an Occurrence liable even instantly to Happen, and, consequently, in prudence and sobriety to be provided against, as That, on Which the Everlasting Destiny of the Soul would Depend.

The description given by St. Luke of the opening Division of This Parable, is as follows: *And JESUS Spake to them a Parable; "Behold the fig-tree and all the trees! when they now shoot forth; ye see and know of your own Selves that summer is now nigh at hand: so likewise ye, when ye see These Things come to Pass, know ye that The KINGDOM of GOD is Nigh at hand!"*—Chap. xxi 29 to 31.

In the world of the Human heart, when The SPIRIT of The ALMIGHTY is well nigh quenched within it, through the rebellion and wickedness reigning therein, then darkness and dismay succeed with a fearful looking-for of Judgment; and which are the sure forebodings of the near Approach of DIVINE Chastisement, and of That Coming of The LORD, Clothed with the Terrors of Eternal Vengeance, Aiming the Spear of inevitable Destruction. But owing to the Intercession of our Great and Gracious PEACE-MAKER, a Season of Repentance is Given to All, ere the Fulness of GOD'S Wrath is Put forth. And well, indeed, will it be for every Soul, that attends to These Warnings, and in watchfulness and faithfulness profits Thereby, departing from the evil of its past ways, and turning wholly to The LORD. Unto all Such, and to us also, if our hope be holy, as founded on a righteous faith, the affectionate exhortation of One of The LORD'S Apostles is peculiarly applicable: *Be patient, Brethren, unto the Coming of The LORD! Behold, the Husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the Earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain: be ye also patient! stablish your hearts! for The Coming of The LORD Draweth Nigh:* [James v, 7, 8.] afterwards adding, *Grudge not One against Another, Brethren, lest ye be condemned! Behold, The JUDGE Standeth before the door.*—19.

Instantly on the separation of the Soul and Body by death, (and how soon that may take place to All or Any of us None can tell, and it may even do so ere another hour is gone by,) the Door of the Judgment Hall of Eternity will, virtually be Opened upon us, and He, Who is The JUDGE, and Who Holdeth in His Will and Power the Issues of Life and Death Eternal, will shortly Appear before us with the Book of Remembrance in the One Hand, and the Scroll of Eternal Destiny in the Other. Unto Such as have not clung in their life to JESUS, as The ROCK of Salvation, and, by the Fruits of The SPIRIT, sought to avert the Inexorable and Interminable Sentence of Rejection from the Blissful Presence of A Reconciled GOD, through CHRIST JESUS, the Rod of Vengeance, unceasingly and inconceivably Afflictive, will be Applied; and Woe, Woe, Woe will be their Portion and Inheritance for ever!! But let not us so wantonly and madly sacrifice the Substance of Solid and Enduring Happiness for its falsely pictured image, and substitute the fear or the honour of Man for the Honour and the Fear of GOD! If The Omnipresence, as well as The Omnipotence of The DEITY were rightly considered and duly laid to heart, so as to be allowed to possess the Influence, Which, it cannot be denied, They should have over it, we should then Spiritually see The Great JUDGE of Quick and Dead Ready in every instant to Deliver His Irreversible Decree; and should seek out, as the Paramount and Prevailing Object of our desire, the Means of Redemption from a Just Sentence on our Spiritual unworthiness, in CHRIST'S Satisfaction of DIVINE Justice on our behalf; that Come, when He may, He may Come to us with the Attributes of Mercy, and Infuse into our Souls a Joy Surpassing knowledge, with the Voice of Pardon and Acceptance.

The Words in the Gospel according to St. Mark, of the same opening Division, are, "*Now learn a Parable of the fig-tree! When her branch is yet tender and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near: so ye, in like manner, when ye shall see These Things come to Pass, know that It is Nigh, even at the doors!*" —Chap. xiii, 28, 29.



The Declaration of our SAVIOUR, "*This Generation shall not pass away, till All These Things be Fulfilled!*" is and must be understood in a figurative and not in a literal sense, and to have reference to That KINGDOM of HEAVEN, Which He (Who from The Divinity of His Nature Knew all Things, even the Things, Hidden from Man, but in the womb of Futurity,) had before Declared to be at hand: and, therefore, Exhorted to repentance and faith, lest an Inheritance in Its Seats of Glory should be forfeited for ever; and, on the contrary, the gates of everlasting Perdition should open for reception. *The Word of The LORD is Verity and Judgment, and standeth Fast for Ever! Have I Said? and shall I not Do It? Saith The LORD. Yea, the Heavens and the Earth, and the Whole of Created Nature, vast and various as are the Objects even of this visible World, shall pass away! But the Word of The LORD shall not Pass away.* The Judgments of The ALMIGHTY are continually upon the Earth; and happy are the Souls, in whatever Generation they live, that, by a lively regard to Them, in the spirit of docile and obedient Children, receive and appropriate Them as Lessons Profitable for Salvation.

The Words from St. Mark, in continuation, are: "*Verily I Say unto you. That this Generation shall not pass, till All These Things be Done! Heaven and Earth shall pass away; but my Words shall not Pass away.*"—Chap. xiii, 30, 31.

Those from St. Luke, also in continuation, are: "*Verily I Say unto you. This Generation shall not pass away, till All be Fulfilled! Heaven and Earth shall pass away; but My Words shall not Pass away.*"—Chap. xxi, 32, 33. [See the observations on a similar Text at Chapter xvi; 28.]

O my GOD, said the Prophetic David, (viewing with a Spiritual eye his CREATOR in the Eternity of His Duration, and contrasting Him with the perishable quality of the mightiest of His Material Works,) *of old hast Thou Laid the Foundation of the Earth, and the Heavens are the Work of Thy Hands! They shall perish, but Thou shalt Endure; yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt Thou Change them, and they shall be changed: but Thou art The Same; and Thy Years shall have no end.*—Ps. cii, 24, 25 to 27.

By Another of the Prophets of The LORD did The HOLY GHOST thus Forewarn the Jews, and, through them, their younger Brethren, the Christian World: "*Hearken unto Me, My People, and give ear unto Me, O My Nation! For a Law shall Proceed from Me; and I will Make My Judgment to Rest for a Light of the People: My Righteousness is Near; My Salvation is Gone forth; and Mine Arms shall Judge the People: The Isles shall wait upon Me; and on Mine Arm shall they trust! Lift up your eyes to the Heavens, and look upon the Earth beneath! for the Heavens shall vanish away like smoke; and the Earth shall wax old like a garment: and They, that dwell therein, shall die in like manner! But My Salvation shall be for Ever, and My Righteousness shall not be Abolished.*"—Isa. li, 4 to 6.

See also Chapter v, 18, and the observations thereon.

The knowledge that GOD will Send His Judgments upon the Earth is sufficient, to the reflecting mind, to bring Man on his knees to implore Pardon and Redemption amidst the consciousness of his impurity and offensiveness in the Eyes of A Holy and Just and Omnipotent JUDGE; and this he can only hope to do effectually through faith in the Efficacy of CHRIST'S Meritorious Recompense and Intercession for him. It is not necessary, however, to Salvation, that the precise Period of Those Visitations should be Made known to us: indeed, from the inertness of our Nature in the pursuit of Spiritual Things, the conviction that a certain time would elapse, during which Such Judgment would be Suspended according to The DIVINE Appointment, (which Changeth not,) might produce, in the minds of Many, an almost coextensive indifference in their religious obligations, and in the observance of those Things, Which Belonged to

their Everlasting Peace, yielding to the love of the World, and stifling, for the time, both the fear and the love of GOD. Even from the Chosen Servants of The Omniscient and All-Ordaining GOD-HEAD That Great Secret is Withheld, as Unnecessary to their Governance and Unessential to their confidence, since, in the fulness of a right faith, they look forward to the Fulfilment of The Prediction in The ALMIGHTY'S Own Time, and, in patience possessing their own Souls, strive, with a hearty striving and true Brotherly Spirit of Christian love, to induce in Others that watchful looking-for of The LORD, which, though fearful in a hallowed sense, is yet full of hope in believing an Auspicious Result. To the Indivisible GODHEAD Alone, is the Season of Final Judgment Fore-known: for not only from Angels, but, according to St. Mark's narrative, it was even Unrevealed to the Human Nature of our SAVIOUR, for that Evangelist has recorded it as the Assertion of JESUS Himself when on Earth, "*That of That Day and That hour knoweth no Man, no, not the Angels which are in Heaven; neither The SON, but The FATHER.*"—Chap. xiii, 32. A Similar Check to the too eager curiosity of His Disciples was, previously to our LORD'S Ascension, thus again Given by Him: *When the Disciples were come together, they asked of JESUS, saying, "LORD, wilt Thou at this time Restore again the Kingdom to Israel?" And He Said unto them, "It is not for you to know the Times or the Seasons, Which The FATHER hath Put in His Own Power!"*—Acts 1, 6, 7.

With reference to the Same Momentous and Awful Event, the Certainty of a Judgment, but the impenetrableness of the Veil Thrown over the Season of Its Arrival, St. Peter (as well as St. Paul, in the passages before quoted from him,) thus confirms, and thence urges, with Parental solicitude, that, against That Great Day of The LORD, our feet may be shod with the Preparation of The Gospel of Peace, through a lively faith in JESUS CHRIST: *This second Epistle, Beloved, I now write unto you: in Both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance, that ye may be mindful of the Words, Which were spoken before by the holy Prophets, and of the commandment of us, the Apostles of The LORD and SAVIOUR; knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days Scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the Promise of His Coming? for, since the Fathers fell asleep, all Things continue as they were from the beginning of the Creation!" For This they willingly are ignorant of, that by The Word of GOD the Heavens were of old, and the Earth standing out of the Water, and in the Water; whereby the World that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: but the Heavens and the Earth, which are now, by The Same Word are Kept in Store, Reserved unto Fire against the Day of Judgment and Perdition of ungodly Men. But, Beloved, be not ignorant of This One Thing, That One Day is with The LORD as a Thousand Years; and a Thousand Years as One Day! The LORD is not Slack concerning His Promise, as some Men count slackness: but is Long-Suffering to us-ward; not Willing that Any should perish, but that All should come to repentance! But the Day of The LORD will Come, as a Thief in the night: in the which the Heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the Elements shall melt with fervent heat; the Earth also, and the Works that are therein, shall be Burned up! Seeing then that all These Things shall be Dissolved, what manner of Persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and Godliness? looking for and hasting unto The Coming of The Day of GOD, Wherein the Heavens, being on Fire, shall be Dissolved, and the Elements shall melt with fervent heat. Nevertheless, we, according to His Promise, look for New Heavens and a New Earth, Wherein Dwelleth Righteousness. Wherefore, Beloved, seeing that ye look for Such Things, be diligent, that ye may be Found of Him in Peace, without spot and blameless!*—2 Peter iii, 1 to 14.

How must the Victims of That Signal Instance of the Power and Justice of

GOD, the Deluge, have condemned their Self-destroying folly in preferring the pleasures of their sin, which were but for a season, and were cut short in a moment, to the never-failing Joys of Righteousness and Holiness of life, the fruits Whereof would have been peace and holy hope at the last. They could not but have known that GOD Ruleth over all the Kingdoms of the World; and that, though He is Slow to Anger and of Great Mercy, His Spirit will not always Strive with His Creature Man: and that His Laws could not be trampled on and Himself set at nought with impunity; but that a Day of Account and Retribution must finally come, and that, if they repented not, and turned not from the evil of their ways, they must expect Punishment according to The DIVINE Threatenings. Yet, in defiance of such knowledge, owing to their not applying it to the heart, and from a determined spirit to reject the Counsels of SUPREME WISDOM, and to stifle both the chidings and forebodings of an incensed Conscience, they continued instant in sin, till the measure of their iniquity was full, and the Phial of DIVINE Wrath was Charged beyond Forbearance. What language can describe, or what colours paint, the confusion and anguish and despair that then must have seized those Revellers in sensuality and Revilers of An Omniscient and Almighty GOD. Whatsoever hath happened within our knowledge, or hath been recorded of the Events of earlier days, is Graciously Intended for our admonition: and though The CREATOR has Passed His Word to Destroy no more so universally by Water, yet in That Time, which is Known only to Himself, (and against which He hath so Perseveringly Cautioned us to prepare, lest, like the Deluge in its hour of Desolation, it come when we think not of It,) He will Destroy by Fire both the Sea and the Dry Land; and will Summon every Human Soul, from the first to the latest Born, unto His Awful and Irreversible Judgment. What the Deluge was to the then Inhabitants of the Earth, and what the Desolation by Fire will be to the People who are overtaken by It, such, in effect, will Death be to every One of us, when it advanceth upon us; it will put an end to all power and opportunity of repentance, and bring us, awfully and consciously, to the Presence of A Just and Holy GOD, Who will Render unto every One according to his work; Making Recompense to the Wicked, in Everlasting Banishment from the Glories of Heaven, amidst howlings and terrors and remorse and woe! But unto Them, that have feared Him holily and served Him faithfully, Blessings Such as the eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of Man to conceive; even a Life of Immortality in Communion with the Angels of Light, and in endless Peace and Joy in The HOLY GHOST. Let us, therefore, in the full assurance that The Day of The LORD will Come, and that It will not Tarry, seek Shelter in That Spiritual Ark of Consolation and Preservation, the Merits and Mercies of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, whilst It is Open to us, and There wait with the patience and the hope of Saints. The Mosaic Description by Revelation from On HIGH, may be thus made a most profitable Lesson of Instruction to us: *GOD Saw that the wickedness of Man was great in the Earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually! And The LORD Said, "I will Destroy Man, whom I have Created, from the face of the Earth!" But Noah found Grace in the Eyes of The LORD. And GOD Said unto Noah, "Make thee an ark! And, behold, I, even I, do Bring a Flood of Waters upon the Earth to destroy all Flesh wherein is the breath of life, from under Heaven; and every Thing, that is in the Earth, shall die!" And Noah did according unto All That The LORD Commanded him. And it came to pass, after seven days, that the Waters of the Flood were upon the Earth: the same day were all the fountains of the great Deep broken up, and the Windows of Heaven were opened, and the Rain was upon the Earth forty days and forty nights: and the*

*Waters prevailed exceedingly upon the Earth, and all the high Hills, that were under the whole Heaven, were covered; and all Flesh died that moved upon the Earth; and every Man: All in whose nostrils was the breath of Life, of All, that was in the dry Land, died: and Noah only remained alive, and they, that were with him in the Ark.*—Gen. vi, 5. 7, 8. 13, 14. 17; vii, 5. 10, 11. 12. 19. 21 to 23.

In the Gospel according to St. Luke, the Comparison Drawn by our SAVIOUR, is Extended to the thoughtlessness and wickedness of the Inhabitants of Sodom: *As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the Days of The SON of Man! They did eat, they drank, they married Wives; they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the Ark; and the Flood came and destroyed them all! Likewise also, as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded: but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained Fire and Brimstone from Heaven, and Destroyed them all! Even Thus shall it be, in the Day When The SON of Man is Revealed.*—Chap. xvii, 26 to 30.

But in general History, as well as in Sacred, instances abound of the total demolition of Cities and the Inhabitants thereof by earthquakes and hurricanes and lightning, when, perhaps, those Inhabitants were mostly revelling in luxury and licentiousness, or in outraging the Law of GOD, and setting at defiance, by blasphemy, His Power. So will Calamity, in its Appointed Season, sooner or later overtake every One, whose heart is not right with GOD! for though the Natural Elements may not be Ordained to Execute the Vengeance, yet as it is Appointed unto all Men once to die, and after that to encounter the Judgment, the unquenchable Fire from A justly Incensed DEITY will then Open out Its Terrors on the Reprobate and Unbelieving: *In the days of Noah, (as said St. Peter,) the Long-Suffering of GOD Waited while the Ark was a preparing, wherein Few, that is, eight Souls, were Saved by water: which the Apostle thus happily applies to the Means of Salvation Open to us. The like figure (water,) whereunto even Baptism doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the Flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward GOD,) by the Resurrection of JESUS CHRIST.*—1 Peter iii, 20, 21; see also 2 Peter ii, 5.

Thus have we had set before us Death and Life: and according as we make our election in accepting or rejecting the Means of Grace, the Water will be unto us either a Well-Spring of Life, or will drown us in endless Perdition. May we, therefore, walk continually in the fear of The LORD, having our conversation in Heaven, being in all things sober and temperate and watching unto prayer, that we may be able, without despair, to abide the Day of His Coming; having, by His Assisting Grace, through the Efficacy of His Merits and Mediation, been prepared for It!

Difficult and, indeed, impossible as it is for Man to pronounce a just judgment upon all his Fellows, yet will the Penetrating Eye of The ALMIGHTY Lay open every Heart, and Distinguish, without any mixture of error, between the Evil and the Good, the Just and the Unjust; however the Hypocrite or the Thoughtless may disguise themselves to the eye of Human reason.

The corresponding passage in The Gospel according to St. Luke is as follows: *"I Tell you, (Said JESUS to the Disciples,) in that night there shall be Two Men in one bed, the One shall be taken, and the Other left: Two Women shall be grinding together, the One shall be taken, and the Other left: Two Men shall be in the field, the One shall be taken, and the Other left."*—Chap. xvii, 34 to 36.

Eager as is the eye of him, who travelling in an unknown Land, watcheth for the morn; anxious as that of One, who, amidst an impending storm, looketh for a safe harbour to find refuge in, still incalculably less eager and less anxious should they be, than the Spiritual eye of every living Soul of Man in watching

and making ready against the attacks of temptation and the advance of Death; lest The SUN of Righteousness, instead of Coming with Healing on His Wings, should Rise but to Spread Desolation, and by His Excessive Brightness, Produce a darkness and gloom, that may and must be felt, but cannot be penetrated.

St. Mark, in his narrative hath it, in continuation, thus: "*Take ye heed, watch and pray! For ye know not when the Time is: for The SON of Man is as a Man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his Servants, and to every Man his work; and commanded the Porter to watch. Watch ye, therefore! for ye know not when the Master of the House cometh; at even, or at midnight, or at the cock crowing, or in the morning; lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping! And what I Say unto you, I Say unto All, Watch!*"—Chap. xiii, 33 to 37.

St. Luke's record of our SAVIOUR'S Merciful Warning is as follows: "*Take heed to yourselves! lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness and cares of this life; and so That Day Come upon you unawares! For as a snare shall It Come on All Them, that dwell on the face of the whole Earth. Watch ye, therefore, and pray always, that ye may be Accounted worthy to escape All These Things, That shall come to Pass, and to stand before The SON of Man!*"—Chap. xxi, 34 to 36.

If prudence lead to protection in temporal matters, what sort of Spirit must they be of, who neglect even an equal degree of circumspection and forethought in What Appertains to their Everlasting Interest, and neglect to lay up Treasure in Heaven; in comparison of Which the whole World itself, and all it has to offer in the way of illicit indulgence and gratification, are as the revelry of the night which is gone with the morning's Sun. And yet with arduous toil and anxious watching do almost all Mankind seek for the one, and with equal though unaccountable indifference absolutely disregard the Other. It is not Ordained that we should look into all the circumstances of Futurity. It is enough that our Almighty CREATOR hath Revealed Himself unto us as A GOD of Mercy, as well as of Judgment, through JESUS CHRIST, and that He is both Willing and Able, through the Merits of The Same SON of His Love, and by the Mediation He Effected for the Faithful, to Save Such of us as have faith to be So Saved, and who, with a penitent and true heart, turn unto Him. By the very uncertainty that attaches to all Sublunary Things, GOD Graciously Admonishes us daily and hourly and instantly, that to delay seeking His Pardon and Reconciliation, is to trifle with OMNIPOTENCE, by setting at nought The DIVINE Forbearance and Forgiveness, and to put in jeopardy, most awfully, our Immortal Souls.

△ *This know, (Said our SAVIOUR, as is recorded by St. Luke,) that if the good Man of the house had known what hour the Thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through. Be ye, therefore, ready also! For the SON of Man Cometh at an Hour when ye think not!*"—Chap. xii, 39, 40.

In the Revelations from On HIGH to the Favoured Apostle of our LORD, it is thus that we are Admonished, through the Church in Sardis: *Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die! lest our works should not be Found perfect before GOD: remembering how we have received and heard, and repent! But if we do not watch, The LORD will Come on us as a Thief; and we shall not know what hour He will Come upon us.*—Rev. iii, 1, 2, 3. *Blessed is he that watcheth!*—Rev. xvi, 15.

We are all Servants of The MOST HIGH, all Stewards of the Manifold Mercies of GOD: HE has further Bound us to His Service by That unspeakable Love, Which hath Influenced Him to Assure us that our faithlessness shall be

ed with an Everlasting Reward, even Eternal Life and Joy amidst the of Holy Angels and in the Communion of Saints: and He hath Coupled comforting Prospect with the Further Assurance that He is not Extreme mark what is done amiss; but that Forgiveness and Plenteous Redemption ith Him, through the Mediation of JESUS, if we will but lay aside trans- on, and, repenting us of the evil, turn, with true hearts and meek spirits, Him, striving, by present obedience, to give efficacy to That Mighty m, Which hath been Paid to Rescue us from the Punishment of sin, and tain for us DIVINE Reconciliation. Let us, therefore, ere our LORD to Demand of us, finally, our unalterable account, take heed unto our rdship, lest, from the Effects of His Displeasure, we are Removed from longer Stewards, and are even unable then to make ourselves Friends of ammon of Unrighteousness! Let us, therefore, by Self-examination and entive consideration of The DIVINE Law, look into the account, which ust render to the All-Seeing Eye of GOD, without partiality and without risy! Sudden and unexpected, to the instant of its arrival, Death may to Any or All of us. Oh! may it yet find us, when it does come, so pre- that, through a previously operating faith in the Great and Gracious ice Offered up for all penitent Believers, we may, at the Day of Judgment, That Blessed Sentence Pronounced to us, *Well done, good and faithful Ser- enter ye into your MASTER'S Joy, Prepared for you from the foundation World!*

various are the Endowments of Mankind by their Merciful and Gracious TOR: but All are Given, that All may employ their several Portions of , with reverence and holy gratitude, to the Glory of The GIVER, the good ir own Souls, and the benefit of Others: Every One, therefore, whether or Female, in the appointed station, whether high or low, is to the extent qualifications a Ruler over all or part of the Household of The LORD; ould diligently and honestly fulfil the allotted duties, which are, to do and to distribute and to be in charity with All; giving the praise thereof m, Who Prompted the Spirit so to do; and following, in all things, the d Example of The GOD-Man CHRIST JESUS, Who Consulted in All s His Heavenly FATHER'S Will, and Fulfilled All the Work That was efore Him; though Assailed in His Progress by Persecutions and Death. unsearchable are the Ways of GOD'S Mercy! How immeasurable the it of His Love! Since for the mere fulfilment of our duty and accepting own Gracious Offers upon His Own Terms, in the mere moment of our nce in the Life that is, He hath Promised to Recompense us with the sion of Blessedness, equal, if not superior, to the Angels. The Accordance

Luke in this part of the Gospel is particularly close: *And The LORD "Who then is that faithful and wise Steward, whom his Lord shall make over his Household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? d is that Servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing: of a I Say unto you, That he will make him Ruler over all that he hath."*— xii, 42 to 44.

o be Blessed, as the Christian is here, with holy hope, and hereafter, as er he will be, with Heavenly Joy, what gratitude and devotion should it and keep alive in our hearts; and how ought we to submit, not only ut murmuring, but with content and even cheerfulness to The DIVINE nsations? And how ought we to strive, with all the earnestness and per- nce, that can possibly be directed to an object, to do our Heavenly TER'S Business, and employ the Talents, with Which He hath Entrusted d the Authority, with Which He hath Invested us, in faithfulness and

devotedness, and as dutiful and loving Subjects and Servants of The KING of Kings and LORD of Lords.

△ To the Office of Stewards of GOD'S Household, in a pre-eminent degree, the Ministry of the Church are Appointed, and on the faithful fulfilment of their Stewardships in the spirit of love towards their Heavenly MASTER, great will be their Glory on reaching His KINGDOM. Oh! that All could, as All should, individually say, *LORD, of Them That Thou Gavest me, have I neglected none!* But not only to them, but to all the Lay Members of the Church of CHRIST, in a degree proportionate to their influence in Society, is the admonition of St. Paul applicable: *Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the Flock, over the which The HOLY GHOST hath Made you Overseers, to feed the Church of GOD, Which He hath Purchased with His Own Blood!*—Acts xx, 28. All Professors of Christianity should account of themselves, and bring themselves to an account, as *Ministers of CHRIST, and Stewards of the Mysteries of GOD*: recollecting that, as in Worldly concerns, it is required in Stewards, that a Man be found faithful: [1 Cor. iv, 1, 2.] so in a supreme degree should he be faithful in Spiritual Concerns Committed to his charge, according to his abilities and opportunities, if he would reap a Participation in the Fruits of Those exceeding Great and Precious Promises Held out to him, through CHRIST, in the Gospel. In his Address to the Hebrew Converts, (and not to the Levitical Priesthood of the Nation generally,) the Sacred Writer styles them *Holy Brethren, Partakers of the Heavenly Calling!* thus exhorting them to consider *The APOSTLE and HIGH PRIEST of our Profession, CHRIST JESUS, Who was Faithful to HIM, That Appointed Him; as also was Moses faithful in all his house.*—Heb. iii, 1, 2. With Such Admonition and Examples before us, can we hesitate in obeying the Call; and shall we not go, and do likewise? Similar Beatitudes will be found at Chapter xxv, 21 to 23: and what Encouragement is here? JESUS Said to His Disciples: "*I Appoint unto you, which have continued with Me in My Temptations, a KINGDOM, as My FATHER hath Appointed unto Me.*"—Luke xxii, 28, 29.

To calculate upon a continuance of life beyond the present instant, is alike inconsistent with and in opposition to reason, as well as Revelation, for we see our Fellow Creatures die around us daily, and often from the accidents which assail our Nature, in the height of youth or health; and our own reflections will assure us, if we calmly consult them, that no forethought or care will guard against them, or prevent our exposure to them, ere, perhaps, to-morrow come; to act, therefore, as if we were above the Visitation of Calamity, and out of the reach of the imminence of Death, is rebellion against the Law and Admonition of our MAKER, and injustice to ourselves; but to add to that presumption an impious indulgence in the worst passions of our Nature, to lord it over our Fellow-Beings with a haughty spirit and iron rule, to oppress the Poor, to plunder the Weak and Meek and Helpless, to act the Despot and the Tyrant, striking at the root of Brotherly love, and extinguishing every principle of charity which should shine forth in Man as the Image of his MAKER, regardless that The JUDGE of All Men will assuredly Visit for these things, is to trifle most awfully with our Everlasting Destiny, and to bring down upon ourselves eventual, if not swiftly, Destruction. For though the Day of Visitation be Deferred, yet will the Extended Season of DIVINE Forbearance only magnify, and justly so, our Measure of Punishment if we go on in our iniquity, and repent us not of the evil that is in us; for our offences will then have accumulated till the Efforts of Mercy towards us are Exhausted.

St. Luke's narrative is thus: "*But, and if that Servant say in his heart, 'My Lord delayeth his coming;' and shall begin to beat the Men Servants and*

*Maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken; the Lord of that Servant will come in a day, when he looketh not for him, and at an hour, when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the Unbelievers.*  
—Chap. xii, 45, 46.

To act towards those, whom GOD, by our station in society, has Appointed us to have rule or power over, without regard to their temporal comforts or their everlasting interests, is to sacrifice the prospect of hope, and a title to Compassion from our Heavenly JUDGE, when we shall be Called upon to give in the account of our Stewardship: Then may we expect Judgment without Mercy, if we have shewn no mercy: and to have that Sentence, so big with unutterable horror, Pronounced on us: "*Go, ye Cursed, into Everlasting fire, Prepared for the Devil and his Angels!*" On which wretched and hopeless condition, deeply as we ought to think of it as a warning of our danger, if we follow the lusts of the Flesh and the pride of the eye, and do not our Heavenly FATHER'S Will, some appropriate observations may be found in the remarks on St. Matthew, Chapter viii, 12.

Oppression and Sensuality are decidedly Condemned in the Councils of The MOST HIGH; the one tending to the unfitting ourselves for Heavenly Purity and Communion; the other to the misery of our Fellow-Mortals, who, equally with ourselves, are the Objects of GOD'S Regard and of A SAVIOUR'S Love: and both form indisputable proofs of an alienation of the heart from the Cause of GOD, and the Salvation and Sanctification of the Soul. On vices so subversive of the Benevolent Designs of Almighty Wisdom and Power in All GOD'S Dispensations towards Mankind, if persevered in to the last, will assuredly the Signal Vengeance of HEAVEN be Poured; and though we cannot ascend up into Heaven to know the Exquisite Blessedness that will thus be forfeited, nor can descend into Hell to explore the scenes of Woe, of Remorse, and Despair, that are there experienced; yet is enough Revealed to us, both in the Old and New Testament, to lead us to refuse the evil and choose the good, and looking unto GOD, as The AUTHOR and FINISHER of our faith, to strive to live to JESUS, Who Lived and Died for us. And though we may have to drink of the Waters of affliction, in this Vale of Tears, from the effects of violence or oppression in Others, yet shall we be Sustained with the hope that we may drink for ever of the River of His Pure Pleasures at the Resurrection, when our mourning shall be turned into Endless Joy, and our weeping into extatic Bliss.


CHAP. XXV.—"Then shall The KINGDOM of HEAVEN be Likened unto Ten Virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the Bridegroom; and Five of them were wise, and Five were foolish. They, that were foolish, took their lamps, and took no oil with them: But the Wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the Bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept: and at midnight there was a cry made, 'Behold, the Bridegroom cometh! Go ye out to meet him!' Then All those Virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the Foolish said unto the Wise, 'Give us of your oil! for our lamps are gone out.' But the Wise answered, saying, 'Not so, lest there be not enough for us and you! but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves!' And while they went to buy, the Bridegroom came; and they, that were ready, went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other Virgins, saying, 'Lord! Lord! open to us!' But he answered, and said, 'Verily, I say unto you, I know you not!' Watch, therefore! for ye know neither the day nor the hour, wherein The SON of Man Cometh!"—1 to 13.

In continuation of the Same Earnest and Benevolent Exertion to Impress on the minds of His Hearers the Great and All-Important Truth, that the Day of Judgment and Final Retribution would assuredly Come, however uncertain



the time of Its Coming, and to Warn them, and us through them, of the necessity and wisdom of preparing for It, that It might not Come unawares, as to a Watchman giving himself up to sleep on his post of duty, who is, thereby, liable to be surprised by the Enemy, The COUNSELLOR from on High, The SPIRITUAL David Took up His Parable, and Represented the faithful Servants of The LORD, as Those, who, patiently and piously awaiting the Day of His Advent, are ever preparing for It; and, on the contrary, the careless and thoughtless Sons and Daughters of Pleasure and of Folly and of this World's pursuit, who drive away all holy preparation for It, thought, and, consequently, all the Means of hopefully meeting It; Like the appointed Attendants on a great occasion of earthly, though legitimate, joyfulness, of whom, from the difference of their dispositions and habits, only part were found ready for its sudden arrival; the other part having, through indolence and levity, neglected to do that, which could alone fit them for the office to which they were destined. Whilst, therefore, the Former were invited and welcomed to the joyful scene, and honourably distinguished for their prudence and faithfulness and zeal, the Latter were excluded from all participation in the delights and festivities of the occasion, and left to the anguish of wounded pride and Self-condemnation. We brand with the merited epithet of "foolish" that conduct in Worldly affairs, which neglects the requisite qualifications for its appropriate discharge: and can a similar conduct, having reference to an infinitely more important Situation, that of Candidate for an Election to a Crown of Glory Eternal in the Heavens, be otherwise than foolish in an incalculably greater degree? And yet how rarely is this comparative view taken, and how much more rarely, if taken, is it salutarily laid to the heart, so as to end in becoming and beneficial results? The wisdom of the World is declared to be, and cannot indeed but be, foolishness with GOD; and yet Man, the Creature and Dependant on GOD for All he has, or should hope for, will not reject that, to which his MASTER Objects, and even spurns That Wisdom Which, Coming from Above, would make him wise unto Salvation. When called by baptism within the pale of Christian profession, we should seek, by supplication, in the fervour of devotion, for Unction from The HOLY ONE, and a Live Coal from the Altar of Heavenly Truth, that through the Efficacy of CHRIST'S Merits and Mediation in the spirit of a pure and lively faith, we may follow His Bright Example of Patience and Obedience unto Holiness, bending in all things to our CREATOR'S Appointment; and so may we be cheered in our path and pilgrimage here with the hope of being Received to the Celebration of the Glorious Marriage of The LAMB of GOD with His Church in the New Jerusalem, and may share for ever, with the Saints, the joy of witnessing the Blessedness of That Union. What was Revealed in Vision to St. John, may be then more than realized to us: *I heard, (writes that Apostle and Evangelist,) as it were, the voice of a great Multitude, and as the voice of many Waters, and as the voice of mighty Thunderings, saying, "Alleluia! For The LORD GOD Omnipotent Reigneth!" Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him: for the Marriage of The LAMB is Come; and His Wife hath made herself ready.—* Rev. xix, 6, 7. But as it is *Allotted unto all Men once to die, and after Death the Judgment*, so is a Season of trial and probation previously Given to All, in which, though we may sometimes forget ourselves, and be lost for a little in Worldly cares and anxieties, yet, if our hearts be generally right with GOD, and we sorrow seriously for such departures from Him, (for *He is not Extreme to Mark what is done amiss,*) we may justify to our Souls the hope, that through faith in the Expiatory Sacrifice for us of That Very LAMB of GOD, and in His Fulfilling all Righteousness for us and in our Nature, we may find Mercy at the Last, and be not condemned, but be Accepted and Blessed when we are Judged;

and when The Frown or The Favour of our Heavenly JUDGE will Decide the Everlasting Destiny, for Weal or for Woe, of every Human Soul.

*How hard is it for a rich Man to enter into The KINGDOM of GOD!*  And as with riches, so is it with all circumstances of prosperity, as health and youth and beauty and accomplishments, unless acknowledged as Gifts from GOD, and to be used to His Glory, since they are calculated to lead the Possessors, by the misapplication of them, to the gratification of their vanity and to an indulgence in the dreams of fancy, as though they were the highest objects of Human ambition, and will continue without interruption. And thus are they dealt with in the misleadings of Human folly, as if they were the all of important possessions or qualifications, with which we have to do; and Those, who wrap themselves in the fancied security of them, put off both the Sayings and the Doings of That Wisdom, Which alone Gives the true zest and enjoyment of Earthly privileges and advantages. When the visible Hand of An Angry DEITY is not upon them, by the sting that Adversity leaves in all it fastens on, except a Christian Spirit, they act as if they thought (in case they exercise any forethought at all,) that there is no After State, where an account is to be fearfully and faithfully rendered before A Just and Almighty JUDGE of the deeds done in the Flesh, and when all the vain and wicked workings of the heart, how closely and covertly soever kept from the eye of Man, will be brought fully to light, and exposed, in all their folly and deformity, before Angels and before the Spirits of the whole Human Race then assembled in awful reverence before their CREATOR! Oh! that, shunning such example of Self-interminable Destruction, we would in time be wise; that we would take heed to our ways; that we would think of the Things That belong unto our Everlasting Peace! that we would consider our latter end!

The Day and the Hour will assuredly come, when, in the full conviction of our Infinite Obligations to The GOD of the Universe, we shall be Summoned to the Bar of Definitive Justice. In that Day and that Hour loud will be the cry for Mercy; for in ourselves, and weighed even in our own scales of Justice, we shall be found woefully wanting: but if, not trusting in our own imagined righteousness, but in the Merits of A SAVIOUR, Who hath, in Such Mystery of Love, Interceded, by Such a Sacrifice of Himself, for our Pardon and Peace, we shall, in expectation of that Final Judgment, have turned our feet unto the Testimonies of GOD; and repenting us of our past sins, have thoroughly forsaken them, and fixed our faith wholly and only on CHRIST, and have sought to tread the Path That He Graciously Laid open to Heaven and Happiness, Thence we may, in a Spiritual sense, come boldly to the Throne of Judgment as a Throne of Grace. So may we hope when The BRIDEGROOM, even The MESSIAH, shall Bring His Bride, the Church, to the Mansions of Holy Rest, we may be Called to His Assembly, Where His Triumph will Diffuse Eternal Joy, beyond what the heart can conceive, even of Heavenly rejoicing. With that faith in CHRIST having full possession of our hearts, and influencing our Lives and conversation, we may here have the hope that, *when The LORD Himself shall Descend from Heaven with a Shout, with the voice of the Arch-Angel and with the Trump of GOD: and the Dead in CHRIST shall rise first, and when they, which are alive and shall remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet The LORD in the Air, we, whether dead or alive, may thenceforth ever be with The LORD, and, whilst continuing here, may comfort One Another, in the spirit as well as letter of the Apostle, with these Words: Rejoice evermore: Pray without ceasing: In every thing give thanks; for this is the Will of GOD in CHRIST JESUS!*—1 Thess. iv, 16 to 18; v, 16 to 18. The Admonition of That Blessed LORD to His Disciples, Which was Delivered as

well as Written with a View to the Instruction and Benefit of all Christians in all Ages, and is as the Counsel of the Wisest and Tenderest of Parents unto the Children of their fondest affection, we should ever treasure in our memories, and lay closely to our hearts: "*Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning, and ye yourselves like unto Men that wait for their LORD, when He will Return from the Wedding! that when He Cometh, and Knocketh, they may open unto Him immediately. Blessed are those Servants, whom The LORD, when He Cometh, shall Find watching! Verily, I Say unto you, That He shall Gird Himself; and Make them to sit down to meat; and will Come forth, and Serve them! And, if He shall Come in the second Watch, or Come in the third Watch, and Find them so, Blessed are those Servants!*"—Luke xii, 35 to 38.

Large as is the operation of Christian Charity, and Gracious and Acceptable as is that Gift, when Bestowed upon us by The HOLY SPIRIT of GOD, yet there are limits to its application, which it would be unbecoming in us, and dishonourable to The GIVER, for us to exceed. We throw not pearls to swine, because we know their value, and that such beasts will only tread them under foot and disregard them: to preach to the Reprobate is too often but to excite their blasphemy and derision. It behoves to act up to the Spirit of The DIVINE Commands; for to oppose our judgment to the Decrees of The MOST HIGH, with Whom is no Variableness neither Shadow of Turning, is to transgress where transgression is most awful in its consequences, and to put in jeopardy the Salvation of our Immortal Souls. The wise Virgins felt that their duty to their LORD surpassed all other obligations, and, therefore, that they could not disqualify themselves from fulfilling that duty, by yielding to the solicitations, however importunate, of those whose inconsiderateness had left them destitute of the means of uniting with them in the homage. The KINGDOM of HEAVEN is, in a degree, through the direct Influence of Revelation or the impulse of conscience, Set before All. But, haplessly, there are Those, who prefer the things of Time to Those of Eternity, and yield themselves up to Worldly or sensual objects, regardless of the fruits of bitterness that will eventually spring therefrom; preferring darkness to the light of Spiritual Truth, and closing their eyes to the Glories of Heavenly Inheritance and Communion. Can we contemplate, otherwise than with terror the most alarming, the final condition of those, who lightly esteem The POWER That Created them, and set at nought the Ordinances Made for their Guidance to Heaven, and grieved even to the quenching the Quickening Influence of The SPIRIT That was Given them, through the Great and Gracious Intercession of JESUS, The SON of GOD? Grant, O GOD, in Mercy Grant that we may not come into their communion, nor our Souls take delight in their delusive pleasures! but that we may walk as Children of the Light in all holy conversation and godliness, having our loins girded with the Preparation of The Gospel of Peace, that by the Engraved Righteousness of CHRIST, being Admitted to celebrate the Wedding Feast of The LAMB and His Church, we may be Graciously Received Thereat, when That Holy Season Arrives, and be Welcomed to Its Unending Joys.

To have to go and buy, when we should be fully furnished, and with care and caution might have been, is to have trifled with golden opportunities, disqualifying ourselves for rendering service, when we might be most useful. Even in temporal matters this must be condemned as unwise: how infinitely more so in What Relates to Eternal Objects and Interests? From The Bountiful DISPOSER of All Things, if we suit our application to His Appointed Season, we may obtain the Essentials of Salvation without money and without price. But to neglect So Goodly an Opportunity, is to trust to that deceiving and treacherous World, which is, by too Many, worshipped as their GOD; when

He, Who Created the World, and Spread the Manifestations of His Infinite Goodness over it, has Declared that *He will not Give, nor Suffer to be given, His Honour to Another*. So to reject Him, is to flee for refuge, in the hour of alarm, to our most rancorous and secret and watchful Enemy, at the season he has waited and anxiously looked for as the triumph of his vindictive malice: it is to leave go of the only hold we might have on The ROCK of Salvation, when the Storm, that shall desolate to Everlasting Destruction, shall Arise, and Sweep with Its fury All before It.

Amidst the accidents and infirmities of life, how very Many are there upon whom Death comes, not with a slow and perceptible approach! Not only the blade of the Assassin or of the midnight Plunderer, not only the sense expelling paralysis, and the frenzy-creating fever, have their Victims, as unprepared for their arrival, as for the immediate consequence in reference to their Relationship to The Great SOVEREIGN of the Universe; but the falling of a tile, the casting of a stone, the bursting of a blood-vessel, nay, the slightest particle of matter, even so small as a hair, introduced into the lungs, may occasion instant termination to existence here, or, what is tantamount to it, an utterly powerless state as to the redemption of mis-spent time, and a virtual recovery of opportunities thrown away. In the midst of life we are in death; and no One can say, to the conviction even of himself, that the next day, the next hour, the next minute, may not place him in the situation, allegorically exhibited by this Parable of the Virgins: and why not, whilst it is called to-day, make preparation to meet so possible and awful an Event? Instantly on our leaving this World, if we cannot obtain, through the Graciously Offered Intercession of The SON of GOD, Access through the Door of Salvation to The FATHER, all other hope of Pardon and Acceptance will assuredly fail us. If we find not That Door then Open, neither force nor entreaty will avail any thing; It will be Shut, and Shut for ever! and like the bestial Spirits of Sodom, when struck with blindness by the Angelic Guests of Lot, we may grope for the Door, but shall be unable to find It; and a grievous Rain of Fire and Brimstone, such as Human eye never saw before, nor heart of Man conceived, will Shower its fury upon us, in Afflicting Vengeance from On HIGH for ever and ever! How additionally heart-rending will then be our Self-reproaches at the recollection that we might have escaped such interminable Woe, had we not neglected the Gracious Offer of Salvation; but, on the contrary, that we had, with our eyes open, brought ourselves to such a state of torment, where no ray of hope can enter; and all this endless suffering incurred for so despicable and degrading a surrender of both body and mind to the gratification of the worst passions of our Nature, during the limit of our being here; a limit, how short, even when most extended! In a similar Illustration of the same Subject, our SAVIOUR is recorded to have Said, "*When once the Master of the House is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open unto us!' and he shall answer, and say unto you, 'I know you not whence ye are:' then shall ye begin to say, 'We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our Streets.' But he shall say, 'I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; Depart from me, all ye Workers of iniquity!' there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth; when ye shall see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and all the Prophets, in The KINGDOM of GOD; and you yourselves thrust out.*"—Luke xiii, 25 to 28.

How exalting to the meek and quiet Spirit, that waiteth patiently for the Coming of The LORD, is This Expectation of being United with All the Excellent of the Earth; and contemplating with Spiritual discernment, enlarged almost infinitely beyond our present conception, the Depth of the Riches of

the Power, the Wisdom, the Goodness and Mercy of GOD, through the Redeeming Love of CHRIST! And how appalling to the stoutest heart of unbelief to have realized to its view and experience, that in the Associates of Satan's kingdom, though meeting there with the same Spirits, whom it joined, when on Earth, in a career of folly and dissipation, of ambition or oppression, it will find no element of alleviation in mutual sympathy, but rather that their torments add fuel to the agonies of its own. Oh! let us then, while we have the power, avoid the paths of the Destroyer, and pray earnestly that we may be Led of The SPIRIT into the Way That Passes to the Mansions of Heavenly Peace and Holy Joy. To that end, relying solely on the Merits and Mercies of our SAVIOUR-GOD, let us cease to do evil, and learn to do well; let us no longer be Children of disobedience, that we may become the Adopted Sons of GOD and Co-Heirs with CHRIST! [For corresponding observations see Chapter vii, 21 to 23.] The Text likewise inculcates the Lesson that, not the desperately Wicked alone shall be excluded The KINGDOM of HEAVEN, but the Votaries of Pleasure, and Those who give way to Spiritual indolence and inactivity also: and that not only the commission of actual sin, but the omission of positive duty, will disqualify for being Elected to a Seat in the Assembly of the Spirits of just Men made perfect, and will even exclude from the Courts of the Gates of Those Mansions of Eternal Joy, where they dwell: for, as avowed, prophetically, by the holy David, *Not only does The LORD Hate all Workers of iniquity; but the Foolish shall not stand in His Sight.*—Ps. v, 5.

△ The Almighty JUDGE of Quick and Dead well Knoweth All Things from the Creation to the Dissolution of the World: to Him all Hearts are open; from Him no secrets are hid: not, therefore, in the literal sense, but agreeably to the liberal construction of the Context are these Words, "*I Know you not,*" to be understood, and as implying that GOD Knew them to be unfit Candidates for That Clemency, Which, Comprehensive as It is through the Love and Offices of CHRIST, yet Opens not to Receive them. In a similar sense must be taken the Address to The HOLY ONE, by the Prophet Habbakkuk: *THOU art of Purer Eyes than to Behold evil; and canst not Look on iniquity.*—i, 13. So also the declaration of the Man, who, though born blind, our SAVIOUR Made to see, namely, That *GOD Heareth not Sinners:* [John ix, 31.] for GOD, Who is Essentially Omnipresent, cannot but both See and Hear every deed done, and every word uttered, and be fully Acquainted with every thought and purpose of the heart of Man, whether Sinner or Saint; but those of the Former The ALMIGHTY Sees and Hears and Records but to Punish or Frustrate; whilst those of the Latter are Accepted by Him with Favour and with Kindness, and with the Fulness of His Gracious Promises. The Prophet Isaiah thus emphatically admonishes: *Woe unto them, that seek deep to hide their counsel from The LORD; and their works are in the dark; and they say, "Who seeth us? and who knoweth us?" Surely your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the Potter's clay; for shall the work say of him that made it, "He made me not?" or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, "He had no Understanding?"*—Chap. xxix, 15, 16.

From the repeated occasion on which the Admonition "to watch" is introduced, may be gathered, not only a sense of the earnestness with which the Exhortation was Endeavoured to be Impressed on Mankind, but the peculiar importance which, with reference to the Everlasting Interests of Man, belonged to it. Watch, therefore! and to watch well is not to look out for, but to prepare for, the Object in question; and, if there be an Object deserving a more than ordinary degree of previous regard and forethought, it assuredly is That on Which hangs the Everlasting Destiny of our Souls, when all Means of Recon-

ciliation with GOD, not previously taken advantage of, shall fail us, and when neither watching nor praying, though we would force our eyes from their sockets, or lay bare our knees with posture supplication, can render us any benefit; for the Season will be irreversibly passed for effectual repentance, and the Condemnation by An Almighty and Inflexible JUDGE, because slighted in His Proffers of Mercy, will be in Justice and without Mercy Enforced. [See observations on Chapter xxiv, 42 to 44.] To the same end, and with a similarly benevolent intent, St. Paul gave this admonition to Some of the Gentile Converts: *Watch ye! stand fast in the faith! quit you like Men! be strong!* and he then adds, what he so pre-eminently inculcated as the distinguishing characteristic of the true Christian, and as the sure offspring of vital faith: *Let all your things be done with charity!*—1 Cor. xvi, 13, 14. *Be sober! be vigilant!* saith St. Peter; and he assigns a reason for it, which should rivet the attention of every professing Christian:—*because your Adversary, the Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist stedfast in the faith! knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your Brethren, that are in the World. But The GOD of All Grace, Who hath Called us unto His Eternal Glory by CHRIST JESUS, after that ye have suffered awhile, Make you perfect, Stablish, Strengthen, Settle you!*—1 Peter v, 8 to 10. May we be found amongst the Friends of The BRIDEGROOM, that our joy may be fulfilled because of His Welcoming Voice!—John iii, 29.

“For The KINGDOM of HEAVEN is as a Man travelling into a far Country, who called his own Servants, and delivered unto them his goods: and unto One he gave five talents, to Another two, and to Another one: to every Man according to his several ability: and straightway took his journey. Then he, that had received the five talents, went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents: and likewise he, that had received two, he also gained other two. But he, that had received one, went and digged in the earth, and hid his Lord's money. After a long time the Lord of those Servants cometh, and reckoneth with them. And so he, that had received five talents, came and brought other five talents, saying, ‘Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more!’ His Lord said unto him, ‘Well done, thou good and faithful Servant! thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee Ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!’ He also, that had received two talents, came, and said, ‘Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them!’ His Lord said unto him, ‘Well done, good and faithful Servant! thou hast been faithful over a few things: I will make thee Ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!’ Then he, which had received the one talent, came and said, ‘Lord, I knew thee, that thou art an hard Man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: and I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine!’ His Lord answered, and said unto him, ‘Thou wicked and slothful Servant! thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: thou oughtest, therefore, to have put my money to the Exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. Take, therefore, the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents!’ For unto every One that hath shall be given; and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not, shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable Servant into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth!’—14 to 30.

In further Illustration of the indispensable necessity of improving the Gifts, whether intellectual or physical, whether of property or of power, which The Bountiful Giver of all Things hath Freely, and without price, Bestowed on us in different degrees, though for the same end, the Advancement of His Own Glory, and our own happiness both in Time and Eternity, with reference to that Awful Day, when the assembled World shall have Judgment Passed on it, and when each Individual Member of it shall be Dealt with according to the deeds done in

the flesh, and according to the use or abuse of Advantages received, another Parable is Introduced, and forcibly Directed to influence to a consideration of what vital importance to Eternal Well-being it is to act as good Stewards of the manifold Graces of GOD: Holding out the Encouragement of great Recompense and enduring Benefit, if we rightly apply Them; and, on the other hand, marking the signal Displeasure of The Justly Incensed GIVER, if They are used amiss, or not improved as an advancement to His Glory.

The narrative of this Parable by St. Luke is as follows: *And as they (who were assembled with JESUS in the house of Zaccheus, the Publican,) heard the Things He Spake, He Added this Parable, because He was Nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that The KINGDOM of GOD should immediately Appear; He Said, therefore, "A certain Nobleman went into a far Country to receive for himself a Kingdom, and to return: and he called his ten Servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, 'Occupy, till I come!' But his Citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, 'We will not have this Man to reign over us.' And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the Kingdom, then he commanded these Servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every Man had gained by trading. Then came the First, saying, 'Lord! thy pound hath gained ten pounds.' And he said unto him, 'Well, thou good Servant, because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten Cities.' And the Second came, saying, 'Lord! thy pound hath gained five pounds.' And he said likewise to him, 'Be thou also over five Cities.' and Another came, saying, 'Lord! behold, here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin; for I feared thee, because thou art an austere Man; thou takest up that thou laydest not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow.' And he said unto him, 'Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked Servant! Thou knewest that I was an austere Man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow; wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the Bank, that at my coming I might have received mine own with usury?' And he said unto them that stood by, 'Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds!' (and they said unto him, 'Lord, he hath ten pounds!') 'For I say unto you, That unto every One which hath, shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath, shall be taken away from him. But Those, mine Enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me!'"—Chap. xix, 11 to 27.*

Varied as these narratives are in several minute circumstances, so as to render probable their having been Delivered at different times: to the same end they both evidently tend, that of inculcating the necessity of labour in the Vineyard of The LORD, to improve in blessings around us the Gifts He hath Imparted to us, that we may be able to render unto Him a profitable account, when Summoned to His Final Judgment upon us. The Gifts, both of Nature and of Grace, are exclusively from The LORD; and Both should be employed in deference to That Pure and Holy and Almighty SOURCE. Not only the Rich and Mighty, to whom Rule on Earth is, for a time, Appointed, but the Poor and the Needy and the ignorant (poor and needy and ignorant as they may be comparatively,) have still Some measure of faculty and acquirement and of property in the common bounties of Nature, and especially in the Privileges of Creation and Redemption, for Which they will be held responsible. And as in the parallel Parable, five talents gaining five through the honest industry of him, who was entrusted with them, gained only the same benefit, relatively, which was bestowed on that Servant who had two, but in like manner fulfilled to the full his duties respecting them, so is it thence to be reasonably expected, that according to that we have, and not according to that we have not, according to

the exertions we use in proportion to the ability Imparted to us from ABOVE, and not according to the effect of our efforts without any such reference, will be, through the Procurement of CHRIST, the Measure of Reward, when the Doors of Heaven shall be Opened to Believers, and the Purer Blessings of Perfect Spirituality be Diffused amongst Those, that are Admitted within Them. This Principle seems most reconcilable with the best notions entertained of the Perfection of DIVINE Justice, and is alike calculated to repress any contentious spirit of superiority or unchristian emulation on the one hand, and, on the other to cheer and brighten the hopes of the Meek and Lowly and Contrite Heart. And even should there be a Diversity of Conditions in the Life to Come; and The ALL-WISE, in His Infallible Discrimination, should Apportion His Eternal Blessings in different Degrees, we may rest satisfied that no envies or jealousies, or murmurings or discontents can Thence arise; but Each Individual, amongst the Company of the Blessed, that shall be Admitted in the Train of The LAMB of GOD, will acknowledge the Perfect Propriety of the then Present, as well as of all Past Dispensations, and will fill his Soul, to the full measure of its susceptibility, with the consoling and enduring reflection, that he shall for ever behold the Glory of The LAMB, and have joy in His Presence, by being Included within the Pale of Salvation, through faith in That Gracious Sacrifice of A SAVIOUR-GOD Adopting our Nature, and Reconciling our Heavenly FATHER to Restore it to His Favour. Such a Portion of Bliss will be Experienced immeasurably beyond conception, even if among the Least in The KINGDOM of HEAVEN. There cannot be a more wholesome rule of conduct adopted by Man, with reference to That Prize, for Which every One should earnestly, as he may successfully, contend, the Mark of his High Calling in GOD through CHRIST JESUS, than the conviction of his ultimate responsibility for every faculty and quality and influence he possesses, and the continually acting upon the principle of his being but a Steward of Them; and as Such Appointed by The Great GOD of the Universe to employ Them all, and always to That Gracious GIVER'S Glory and in the goodly work of ministering to Other's Salvation through a like faith in the Sacrificial Mediation of The SON of GOD, Who so Sought to Propitiate the Pardon of the sins of the World. This operating sense of our being but Accountants of A POWER, Whom no arts can deceive, nor flattery or corruption blind or bribe, would give us, besides the Promise of the Blessings Which Await the Redeemed beyond the Grave, the truest and only rational enjoyment of the Life that is, and of the innocent pleasures and gratifications with which, to a regenerated and Spiritualized heart, it is attended. Various as are the qualities, and widely different as are the conditions of Mankind in this World, though all are Spiritually upon an equality, (for with GOD there is no respect of Persons,) yet neither murmuring nor repining thereat should arise or be fostered, since Such difference is but for a season; and no situation, however menial or afflicted, can, with the least semblance of reason, be otherwise than richly compensated for by the fruits of Faith, the Peace and Joy in believing the Promise of Eternal Blessedness; a State which, in the Mystery of DIVINE Love, CHRIST, by What He Endured for no other Purpose than for Man's Redemption from the bondage of Sin and Satan, Freely Offers, and by Which alone is the enslaved Soul Set Free. This hearty submission to The DIVINE Dispensations in the Allotments of Life, Christianity inculcates as a lesson of primary importance to her Disciples; and One of the most powerful Teachers of her Doctrines and Exemplifiers of her duties, hath thus beautifully illustrated and enforced the observance of the Precept: *I beseech you, Brethren, by the Mercies of GOD, that ye present your Bodies a living Sacrifice, holy, Acceptable unto GOD; which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed*



to this World: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind: that ye may prove What is That Good and Acceptable and Perfect Will of GOD! For I say, through the Grace Given unto me, to every Man, that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as GOD hath Dealt to every Man the Measure of Faith! For as we have many members in one Body; and all members have not the same office, so we, being many, are one Body in CHRIST, and every One members One of Another. Having then Gifts, differing according to the Grace That is Given to us, whether Prophecy, let us prophecy according to the proportion of Faith! or Ministry, let us wait on our ministering! or he, that teacheth, on teaching! or he, that exhorteth, on exhortation! he, that giveth, let him do it with simplicity! he, that ruleth, with diligence! he, that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness!—Rom. xii, 1 to 8. And in another place, the same Apostle speaketh applicably to our present division of Subject: There are Diversities of Gifts; but The Same SPIRIT: and there are Differences of Administrations; but The Same LORD: and there are Diversities of Operations; but it is The Same GOD Which Worketh All in All. But the Manifestation of The SPIRIT is Given to every Man to profit withal: for to One is Given by The SPIRIT the Word of Wisdom! to Another, the Word of Knowledge by The Same SPIRIT! to Another, Faith by The Same SPIRIT! to Another, the Gifts of Healing by The Same SPIRIT! to Another, the Working of Miracles! to Another, Prophecy! to Another, discerning of Spirits! to Another, divers kinds of Tongues! to Another, the Interpretation of Tongues! But All These Worketh That One and The Self-Same SPIRIT, Dividing to every Man severally as He Will.—1 Cor. xii, 4 to 11. And in another passage, when addressing himself to some Gentile Converts, and through them to us, he says, There is one Body and one Spirit, even as ye are Called in one hope of your Calling, One LORD; one Faith, one Baptism; One GOD and FATHER of All, Who is Above All, and Through All, and In you All! But unto every One of us is Given Grace according to the Measure of The Gift of CHRIST: wherefore He Saith, (by David, in the lxxviii Psalm, 18,) “When He Ascended up on High, He Led Captivity captive; and Gave Gifts unto Men.” And He Gave Some Apostles, and Some Prophets, and Some Evangelists, and Some Pastors and Teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Ministry, for the edifying of The Body of CHRIST; till we All come in the Unity of the Faith, and of the knowledge of The SON of GOD, unto a perfect Man, unto the measure of the Stature of the Fullness of CHRIST.—Eph. iv, 4 to 8. 11 to 13.

△ If it be our interest as well as duty, so to use the good things of this World, as not to abuse them, since we thereby lay up for ourselves, through a lively gratitude to The GIVER of All, Treasures in Heaven, where neither rust nor moth doth corrupt, nor Thieves break through nor steal; how justly is it required of us that we should profitably apply the more estimable Gifts of the Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT, Obtained for us by the Sacrifice of The SON of GOD, to the Great End for which Life and Light and Immortality were Conferred on our Nature, the advancement of our own Souls and the Souls of Others, entrusted to our care or within the sphere of our influence, in the Way of Salvation, through faith in That Great Sacrifice.

As Industry in Worldly pursuits generally ensures its own reward, so doth ordinarily, exertion in the discharge of the duties we owe to GOD, and the walking in the way of His Commandments, obtain for us the fruits of Righteousness in an inward peace here; but assuredly doth it impart a sustaining hope, that whatever measure of tribulation or privation we may here experience, there awaiteth us a joy in the Life to Come in an Eternal Portion of our SAVIOUR'S Love, Which will Fill the Soul with endless ecstasy.

At the disproportion of Spiritual Gifts None should repine, but be thankful that he has, in any degree, shared the Distributive Favours of Him, in Whom we live and move and have our Being. We should, without feeling disparagement at Other's superiority in The DIVINE Dispensations, strive to improve our own Privileges and opportunities. For if, like the unprofitable Servant, we do but by or render useless the talent entrusted to us, equally slighting The GIVER of the Gift; and much more, if we pervert its uses and employ it in furtherance of evil purposes, we shall bring down upon ourselves the Just Anger of GOD, and receive, in recompense, an eternal banishment from the Glories of His Presence, having made shipwreck of that faith in CHRIST, which, by the love of Him, could alone Save us.

Dreadfully do we deceive ourselves, if, entrusted, as we all are, in the character of Stewards of the manifold Gifts of GOD, in whatever proportion we individually receive Them, we delay using the faculties or properties Imparted to us to His Honour and Service; vainly supposing that The LORD doth not do will not Regard us, or that, before He Cometh to Call us to account, there will be time, and ample time, Allowed us to make amends, by repentance, for our past and present and still accumulating remissness of duty! For shall He, Who Made the eye, not See? And is there any thing, which from Him, Who Essentially every where Present, and Knoweth all things, can be concealed? Indeed, there is neither action nor word nor purpose nor thought, but He knoweth it altogether, and Weigheth it in the Perfect Scales of His Infinite Wisdom and Immutable Justice. But though certain is it that thus will He Judge every Man; yet the Day or Hour of That Judgment, Unrevealed as It is to us, no mind of Man can penetrate: but as far as our interest in connection with It exists, we are assuredly led to believe, that to Each One of us It will, in due season, Come after the cessation of the Life that is, when the season for labour, and repentance and amendment will close, and the Stewardship here Committed to us will cease, so that we cannot then do the things, we would, to obtain Mercy in That Judgment. But if we have been faithful in That, which has been graciously Committed to us by our DIVINE LORD and MASTER, how exulting to the Soul will then be the whisper of an approving conscience at that awful Season; and how richly will that unfailing Monitor's voice sound, on the spiritual ear, the Sweet Harmony that awaits beyond the grave in Blessedness eternal, through faith in the Love of A DIVINE SAVIOUR, and in the efficacy of His Interposed Merits on our behalf. [See Chapter xxiv, 46.]

Let us apply to ourselves the admonition *to lay aside every weight, and the sins which doth so easily beset us, and to run, with patience, the Race that is Set before us; looking unto JESUS, The AUTHOR and FINISHER of our Faith; Who, for the Joy That was Set before Him, Endured the Cross, Despising the shame; and is Set down at the Right Hand of The Throne of GOD.*—Heb. xii, 1, 2.

And to a Portion of That Joy, Which was Set before CHRIST, in His human Nature, are we severally Invited, as the Prize, which awaits at the goal of this Life, Such Souls as, in the fulness of faith and fervour of Spirit, seek The LORD, while He may be Found, and call upon Him, while He is Near.

Though not, perhaps, in direct terms or expressions, as was the unprofitable Servant, we may be found complaining of the duties Enjoined us by our Heavenly MASTER, as the impositions of a hard Task-Master; yet wherein do we essentially differ from that character of Servant, if we do not our Heavenly MASTER'S Will, or lightly esteem The LORD, That Bought us? if from a casual or slothful disposition, we neglect to improve to Spiritual purposes the Gifts, of what ever quality or degree, which from Him we have received; and oppress, instead of gratefully diffusing, the Operations and Promptings of The

HOLY SPIRIT within us? Is not such a remissness or indifference in using the Means thus Graciously Put within our power, whereby the Just Praises of our GOD and SAVIOUR might be Extended, and His KINGDOM Advanced, within the spirit of the unprofitable Servant's offending?

In a Future State the freeness and fulness of Spirituality, within the affections and faculties, will probably constitute the perfection of Heavenly Bliss, and that in so transcendent a degree, that we can here form no adequate conception of: Whilst, on the contrary, the total absence of That Heavenly Influence, will leave the Soul in a state so wretched and so destitute of hope, so full of anguish and remorse and Self-condemnation, as to make it almost, if not altogether, a Hell within itself. Such, however, as spurn the Free and Gracious Gifts of their Almighty BENEFactor, and, more especially, That most Hallowing Gift of The HOLY SPIRIT, and the Faith in JESUS CHRIST, as the Accession to It, (Whereby alone we have Remission of sins, and are Fitted to be Subjects of The KINGDOM of HEAVEN,) will find themselves in the Great Day of Eternal Separation between the Good and the Evil, the Faithful and the Unbelieving, left destitute of That Countervailing Influence of The HOLY GHOST, Which, even in spite of themselves, oft-times Kept them from the paths of the Destroyer, and, amidst the darkness of their Self-deceiving ways, Poured upon their eyes the Light of Truth.

*"Whosoever hath, to him shall be Given; and he shall have more Abundance. But whosoever hath not, from him shall be Taken away even That he hath:"* [Chap. xiii, 12; Mark iv, 25.] or as St. Luke hath it, *That which he seemeth to have.*—Chap. viii, 18.

*"I am The True Vine, (Said The Holy JESUS,) and My FATHER is The HUSBANDMAN. Every Branch in Me, that beareth not fruit, He Taketh away: and every Branch, that beareth fruit, He Purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me! I am The VINE; ye are the Branches! He, that abideth in Me, and I in him, the Same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing. If a Man abide not in Me, he is Cast forth as a branch, and is withered: and Men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned! Herein is My FATHER Glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My Disciples. If ye keep My Commandments, ye shall abide in My Love; even as I have Kept My FATHER'S Commandments, and Abide in His Love."*—John xv, 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10.

To have done despite to The SPIRIT of Grace, to have quenched Its Hallowed Influence in the heart, to have voluntarily transformed ourselves from the Express Image of GOD to the likeness of the Spirits of Evil, is to deserve Darkness in the Life to come, by having, in the Life that is, preferred it to Light. And to them, that have denied The GOD, Who Made them, The SON of GOD, Who would have Redeemed them, and The HOLY GHOST, Who would have Sanctified them, will Darkness, in inconceivable horror, be Visited, when Judgment shall be Pronounced and Sentence of Condemnation Enforced against All, who have done such Self-destroying evil, and put far from them the Spirit of doing well. Great as are the Joys of Heaven beyond the utmost range of Human imagination, so, equally, may it be assumed will be the woes of Hell. And, therefore, while we have ears to hear let us hear, and treasure also up in our hearts *What The SPIRIT Saith unto the Churches*, and, virtually, unto us as professing Members thereof: *These Things, Saith The AMEN, The Faithful and True WITNESS, The BEGINNING of The Creation of GOD, "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot! So then because thou art neither cold nor hot, but lukewarm, I will Cast thee out of My Mouth."*—Rev. iii, 13 to 16.

Here we have another designation of an unprofitable Servant, and a similar assurance of the Awful Fate Awaiting them who go on still in their disregard of the Goodness and Mercy of GOD, and of the Wondrous Love of His SON, and the Gracious Strivings of His SPIRIT. The Measure of DIVINE Forbearance will have an end: and when the Phial of GOD'S Wrath shall be Poured out, then will Those Horrors be Realized to the offending Soul, which are characterized by a great Earthquake, and the Sun becoming black as sackcloth of hair, and the Moon as blood, and the Stars of Heaven falling unto the Earth; when the Heaven itself shall depart as a scroll; and every Mountain and Island be moved out of their places; and when the Kings and all the Mighty of the Earth, whom pride and lust have corrupted, shall seek to hide themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the Mountains, and shall call the Mountains and Rocks to fall on them and hide them from The Face of HIM, That Sitteth on the Throne, and from the Wrath of The LAMB; when the Great Day of His Wrath shall Come.—Rev. vi, 12 to 17. *The Dead, Small and Great, will then equally have to stand before GOD; and the Books of Remembrance will be Opened; and Another Book will be Opened, Which is the Book of Life; and the Sea shall give up the Dead that are in it; and Death and Hell shall deliver up the Dead, which are in them: and they shall be Judged every Man according to their works. And Death and Hell shall be cast into the Lake of Fire and Brimstone, which tormenteth day and night for ever and ever. This is the Second Death: and Whosoever is not found Written in the Book of Life, shall be Cast into the Lake of Fire.*—Rev. xx, 10. 12 to 15. *And the Fearful, and Unbelieving, and the Abominable, and Murderers, and Whoremongers, and Sorcerers, and Idolaters, and all Liars, shall have their part in the Lake, which burneth with fire and brimstone.*—Rev. xxi, 8. Let us, therefore, in faithfulness turn unto GOD, and bless Him for His SON'S Intercession, that we may worship Him Acceptably and with a Godly fear, serving Him with all diligence and singleness of heart; for *Blessed are and will be They, that do His Commandments, and they will have right to the Tree of Life, and will enter in through the Gates into the City of The Heavenly Jerusalem!*—Rev. xxii, 14.

“When The SON of Man shall Come in His Glory, and all the Holy Angels with Him, then shall He Sit upon the Throne of His Glory: and before Him shall be gathered all Nations. And He shall Separate them One from Another, as a Shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and He shall Set the Sheep on His Right Hand; but the Goats on the Left. Then shall The KING Say unto Them on His Right Hand, ‘Come, ye Blessed of My FATHER, inherit The KINGDOM Prepared for you from the foundation of the World! For I was an Hungred, and ye gave Me meat; I was Thirsty, and ye gave Me drink; I was a Stranger, and ye took Me in; Naked, and ye clothed Me; I was Sick and ye visited Me; I was in Prison, and ye came unto Me!’ Then shall the Righteous answer Him, saying, ‘LORD, when saw we Thee an Hungred, and fed Thee? or Thirsty, and gave Thee drink? When saw we Thee a Stranger, and took Thee in? or Naked, and clothed Thee? or when saw we Thee Sick, or in Prison, and came unto Thee?’ And The KING shall Answer, and Say unto them, ‘Verily, I Say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto One of the Least of These, My Brethren, ye have done it unto Me.’ Then shall He Say also unto Them on the Left Hand, ‘Depart from Me, ye Cursed, into Everlasting Fire, Prepared for the Devil and his Angels; for I was an Hungred, and ye gave Me no meat! I was Thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink! I was a Stranger, and ye took Me not in! Naked, and ye clothed Me not! Sick, and in Prison, and ye visited Me not!’ Then shall they also answer Him, saying, ‘LORD, when saw we Thee an Hungred, or Athirst, or a Stranger, or Naked, or Sick, or in Prison, and did not Minister unto Thee?’ Then shall He Answer them, Saying, ‘Verily I Say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to One of the Least of These, ye did it not to Me!’ And These shall go away into Everlasting Punishment! but the Righteous into Life Eternal!’—31 to 46.

The Meek and Despised JESUS, That MAN of Sorrows, Who was so

Acquainted with grief, that His Countenance was Marred more than the Sons of Men, and Who, in the Mystery of DIVINE Charity, Gave Himself A Willing Sacrifice for Man, (The CREATOR for His unfaithful and ungrateful Creatures,) having Yielded His Back to the Smiters, His Head to him, that plucked off the Hair, His Life to the Crucifiers, and His Body to the Grave, that so He might Pay, by Suffering and Patient Resignation, the Penalty of Man's Sin, and by Perfect Righteousness might Bring back The DIVINE Favour in Reconciliation to Believers, will, in the fulness of Time, in All The MAJESTY of His Two-fold NATURE, Come to Judge both Quick and Dead. Then shall the Spirits of all Flesh, the Souls of All of Human Kind, from Adam to the Latest of his Posterity, be Summoned unto the Judgment; a Judgment, Which will be Pronounced by The then universally acknowledged SON of GOD and Man in Perfect Righteousness and Truth. To the Spiritual eye of Man, this Grand and Awful and Imposing Scene should continually be Prophetically Present, that the Soul may be prepared for That, Which so pre-eminently Concerns its Eternal Interest; since by the suddenness of Death, against which no Human power or foresight can guard, it may come upon us so quickly as to leave no moment for repentance, no interval for the influence of faith, no instant for the utterance of effectual prayer.

*Behold, (saith the Prophet Zechariah,) The Day of The LORD Cometh! The LORD, my GOD, shall Come, and All the Saints!—Zech. xiv, 1. 5. [See also Matthew xvi, 27; xix, 28.]* The Coming of our LORD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST, in all the Power and Glory of HEAVEN, as The ADVOCATE of the Faithful, but as The JUDGE of Unbelievers, was thus not only Foretold by Himself, and looked forward to, before His Appearing, by the Prophet, but was at once the confirmation of faith in Him as The MEDIATOR, and the Sustaining boast of the Apostles and immediate Followers of CHRIST, and His Doctrine: and so should it be to Every One of us: and in our hearts should we cherish the Apostolic narrative. *That, when our SAVIOUR was Taken up in His Ascension to Heaven, a Cloud receiving Him out of His Disciple's sight; while they looked stedfastly toward Heaven as He Went up, behold, two Men, or Angels in the form of Men, stood by them in white apparel, which also said, "Ye Men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into HEAVEN? This Same JESUS, Which is Taken up from you into HEAVEN, shall So Come in Like Manner, as ye have seen Him Go into HEAVEN."*—Acts i, 9 to 11. And St. Paul enlarges upon This Momentous Prospect, saying, in his address to the Thessalonians, *I would not have you to be ignorant, Brethren, concerning Them, which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as Others which have no hope; for if we believe that JESUS Died, and Rose again, even so Them also, which sleep in JESUS, will GOD Bring with Him. For this we say unto you, by the Word of The LORD, that we which are alive and remain unto the Coming of The LORD, shall not prevent [precede] Them, which are asleep: for The LORD Himself shall Descend from HEAVEN with a Shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the Trump of GOD. And the Dead in CHRIST shall rise first: then we, which are alive and remain, shall be Caught up together with Them in the Clouds to meet The LORD in the Air; and so shall we ever be with The LORD. Wherefore Comfort One Another with these Words.*—1 Thess. iv, 13 to 18. The same Apostle opens his second Epistle to the same Converts with reference to the Same Great and Awful Event, the Second Coming of CHRIST to Judge the World, which He had before Come to Save. The Apostle, after wishing, in the true spirit of Christian love and Charity, Grace and Peace from GOD, The FATHER, and The LORD JESUS CHRIST, thus proceeds: *We are bound to thank GOD always for you, Brethren, as it is meet, because that your*

*faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every One of you all toward Each Other aboundeth; so that we ourselves glory in you in the Churches of GOD, for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure: which is a manifest Token of the Righteous Judgment of GOD, that ye may be Counted worthy of The KINGDOM of GOD, for Which ye also suffer: seeing it is a Righteous Thing with GOD to Recompense tribulation to them, that trouble you: and to you, who are troubled, Rest with us, when The LORD JESUS shall be Revealed from HEAVEN with His Mighty Angels, in flaming Fire, Taking Vengeance on them, that know not GOD, and that obey not The Gospel of our LORD JESUS CHRIST; who shall be Punished with Everlasting Destruction from The Presence of The LORD, and from the Glory of His Power, when He shall Come to be Glorified in His Saints, and to be Admired in All them, that believe in That Day.—2 Thess. i, 2 to 10.*

To That Same Day of Universal Judgment, the Apostle St. Jude thus alludes, at the same time exhorting to avoid the falling into its Condemnation, as faithless, and reckless of the tendency of evil, saying, *I will put you in remembrance, how that The LORD, having Saved the People out of the Land of Egypt, afterward Destroyed them, that believed not. And the Angels, which kept not their first Estate, but left their own Habitation, He hath Reserved in Everlasting Chains under Darkness unto The Judgment of the Great Day: Adding that Enoch also, the Seventh from Adam, prophesied also of These Things, saying, [Deut. xxxiii, 2,] Behold, The LORD Cometh with Ten Thousands of His Saints to Execute Judgment upon All.—Jude, 5, 6, 14, 15.*

To the Second and Triumphant Advent of JESUS, as The SON of GOD and Man, doth His Favourite Disciple, St. John, thus prophetically draw our attention, saying of Him, that *Behold, He Cometh with Clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him; and all Kindreds of the Earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen!—Rev. i, 7.*

Again, St. Paul writes: *We must All appear before the Judgment Seat of CHRIST, that Every One may receive the things done in his Body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.—2 Cor. v, 10.*

And amidst the Revelations Made to St. John, is the following, Which is handed down to us as Prophetically Confirmatory of the Same Final Event universally awaiting us: *I saw a Great White Throne, and HIM, That Sat on It, from Whose Face the Earth and the Heaven fled away: and there was found no Place for them. And I saw the Dead, small and great, stand before GOD; and the Books were Opened; and Another Book was Opened, Which is The Book of Life: and the Dead were Judged out of Those Things, which were Written in the Books according to their works.—Rev. xx, 11, 12.*

How calculated to inspire awe and admiration in the mind of Man is This Prophetic Vision of the assembled Spirits of all Flesh before An Allwise, Almighty and Just JUDGE, Discriminating with the Truest and Unquestionable Accuracy between the nearest approaches to good or to evil, and the varying shades and differences in their characters, Laying open every hidden deed of darkness, and Exposing every thought and working of every heart of Man, throughout all the Roll of Time, from the first moment of Creation; Eliciting, to the conviction of All around, the Exquisite Propriety of the Sentence Pronounced on Each; Cheering the humble but Accepted Soul with the Exulting Benedictions of His Grace and Favour: But Heaping on the head of the rebellious and reprobate Spirit, in the Consistency of DIVINE Holiness and Truth, Coals of Fire as the Result of an Exclusion from the Happiness of Sanctified Spirits. The meek, the patient, the harmless, the innocent, the pure and faithful Followers of The Great SHEPHERD of Souls, characterized from their gentleness


and passiveness, as being the Flock of His Gracious Care, will be then for ever and ever Divided from the Votaries of all impurity and licentiousness, who, as goats, are full of all filthiness and offensiveness. And the lamb-like Souls of the Faithful will enter into those Pastures, where the Wolves of the Desert with Satan, the Destroyer, at their head, but then curbed of his power, and no longer Allowed to seek whom he may devour, will not molest them; for *there the Wicked cease from troubling, and there the Weary are at Rest.* But Full of Blessedness as is This Assurance of the Perfect Peace and Joy awaiting them, who will ultimately form The One Fold of The ONE Great SHEPHERD, JESUS CHRIST, The Righteous, and Free and Open as is the Pale of It for the entrance of All, who will gratefully join It, obeying the Encouraging Voice of their Heavenly GUIDE, let us consider, that a conformity to the Spirit, of which His Flock is composed, is essential on our part, to become Such as will be His at His Coming. And that, if such conformity be not in us, indispensable as it is for a preparation for and participation in a Community of Holiness, our Portion must be that bitter One, which will be Poured out upon All such Souls, as, having the Means of Spiritual purity and advancement in Holiness through The DIVINE Dispensation, neglected So Great Offer of Salvation, and, though with the Restoration of The DIVINE Image Graciously Pressed upon them, as Intellectual Beings and Immortal Spirits, yet refused to be Delivered from the bondage of this World's pleasures and illicit gratifications. Necessary, as in some degree, perhaps, is the encounter in this stage of Life with Spirits so lost to hope, and aiming at Other's Eternal Destruction as well as insuring their own, so productive of the most acute painfulness to the sensations and reflections of the pure and upright and holy mind, the Association will, on That Day of Eternal Destiny, be for ever severed; since into The KINGDOM of HEAVEN no evil can find entrance. For, as Said The HOLY SPIRIT by His Prophet Ezekiel to the Children of Israel, and which we may virtually apply to ourselves, if we are Israelites indeed in a Christian sense: "*I will Purge out from among you the Rebels and them that transgress against Me.*"—Ezek. xx. 38. And again: *Thus Saith The LORD GOD, "Behold, I, even I, will both Search My Sheep, and Seek them out, as a Shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I Seek out My Sheep; and will Deliver them out of all Places, where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day; and I will Bring them out from the People, and Gather them from the Countries; and will Bring them to their own Land, and Feed them upon the Mountains of Israel, by the Rivers, and in all the inhabited Places of the Country. I will Feed them in a good Pasture; and upon the high Mountains of Israel shall their Fold be: there shall they lie in a good Fold; and in a fat Pasture shall they feed upon the Mountains of Israel. I will Feed My Flock; and I will Cause them to lie down, Saith The LORD GOD: I will Seek That, which was lost; and Bring again That, which was driven away; and will Bind up That, which was broken; and will Strengthen That, which was sick. But I will Destroy the Fat and the Strong; I will Feed them with Judgment! And as for you, O My Flock, thus Saith The LORD GOD, Behold, I Judge between Cattle and Cattle, between the rams and the he-goats! Behold, I, even I, will Judge between the fat Cattle and between the lean Cattle."*—Eze. xxxiv, 11 to 17. 20.


In precisely the same Figure as That Used by our SAVIOUR, had the final Separation between the Good and the Bad, between Those, who served GOD, and Those who served Him not, been thus alluded to under the Law: and from both the Law and Gospel may Instruction in the paths of Righteousness, which lead to the Mansions of Heavenly Bliss, and to the avoidance of those ways, whose end is destruction, be gathered. Having, therefore, the evil

and the good Set before us, and, through the Merciful Forbearance of GOD, yet Allowed a choice and a Season for the adoption, let us not longer halt between two opinions; but at once, and in the instant, elect the Good and reject the evil; since not One of us can tell how long Grace may be Extended to us, or The DIVINE Chastisement be Restrained from Overwhelming us, if we continue regardless of the Merciful Warning.

But if the evil of our ways be departed from, and the remembrance of them be grievous unto us; if having been impure, we be no longer so; but loathing ourselves for the blots and blemishes we have occasioned to our Spiritual Nature, we fall down on the knees of our hearts before The GOD, Whose we are, and Whom we should serve, and pray unto Him to Give us Pardon and to Give us Grace, to Fit and Prepare us for His Heavenly Pastures, we have the Assurance of DIVINE Truth that so seeking, we shall, to our Soul's Everlasting Consolation, find Them.

See observations on St. Matthew Chapter xiii, 49.

Infinitely as are equally the Pleasures of Heaven and the Pains of Hell  above the utmost range of our imaginations, yet to the sober and pious mind, zealous for the investigation of DIVINE Truth, so far, and so far only as It has been Mercifully Revealed to us, there are ample materials to be drawn from meditation on the Word and contemplation of the Works of GOD, to excite unlimited confidence both in the Promises and Threatenings of The ALMIGHTY; reposing faith in the full Perfection of That Bliss, Which is Graciously Reserved for Such, upon whom the Judgment of Mercy and Acceptance in CHRIST will be Pronounced. Not doubting, but believing in the Extremity and Endlessness of That Woe, to which they will be Sentenced, who might have, but would not, come unto Him, that they might have been Saved. The Blessedness, That will be Dispensed to the lowly and lamb-like Spirits, in the Life to Come, is the Consummation of CHRIST'S DIVINE Intercession; and as it is through The SON only that The FATHER can be Approached with hope and Assurance of Favour, it is indispensable for us, under whom the Tidings of Heavenly Peace have been Brought, to seek, by fervent prayer, to be well grounded in the faith, that we may, in the Resurrection to the Life Eternal, be Found Rooted and Built up in CHRIST and Robed in His Righteousness, that we may participate in That Joy of our LORD, Which will be Diffused over all the Families of the Redeemed. Let us, therefore, supplicate with all earnestness for the Guidance and Governance of the Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT, as the First Fruits of Faith in the Mediation of The Blessed JESUS, knowing that *as Many as are Led by The SPIRIT of GOD, they are the Sons of GOD*, as saith St. Paul, for, adds he, *The SPIRIT Itself Beareth Witness with our Spirit, that we are the Children of GOD; and if Children, then Heirs; Heirs of GOD, and Joint Heirs with CHRIST: if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also Glorified together.* —Rom. viii, 14, 16, 17. And with St. Peter may we say, through a lively faith, *Blessed be The GOD and FATHER of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, Which, according to His Abundant Mercy, hath Begotten us again unto a lively hope by the Resurrection of JESUS CHRIST from the Dead, to an Inheritance, Incorruptible and Undeified, and That Fadeth not away, Reserved in the Heaven for Such as are Kept by the Power of GOD through faith unto Salvation, Ready to be Revealed in the Last Time: Wherein we should greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, we may be in heaviness through manifold temptations! Let, however, every trial of our faith, precious as beyond all comparison it is, be found unto praise and honour and glory at the Appearing of JESUS CHRIST, Whom, not having seen, we should love, and in Whom, though now we see Him not, yet if believing, we should rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of Glory,*





*looking forward to receiving the End of our faith, even the Salvation of our Souls!*—1 Peter i, 3 to 9. *For (as saith the same Apostle,) They, that are CHRIST'S, are Called, that they should inherit a Blessing.*—1 Peter iii, 9. And in the Spirit of DIVINE Revelation, The ALMIGHTY is Recorded to have Said, "*I will Give unto him, that is athirst, of the Fountain of the Water of Life Freely: and he, that overcometh, shall inherit All Things; and I will be his GOD; and he shall be My Son. But the Fearful and Unbelieving and the Abominable and Murderers and Whoremongers and Sorcerers and Idolaters and all Liars shall have their part in the Lake, which burneth with fire and brimstone; Which is the Second Death.*"—Rev. xxi, 6 to 8.

On the Preparation, so Graciously Made by GOD, of Seats and Abodes of Eternal Happiness and Peace for them, who are Elected unto the Spiritual KINGDOM of CHRIST, through a lively faith in Him, and in the equal Necessity and Efficacy of His Meritorious and Mediatorial Sacrifice, reference may be made to Matthew xx, 23, and the observations there offered. This Preparation, the Effect of the Foreknowledge by GOD of All, who are, by His Concession to His Beloved SON, to reap the blessed fruits of it, does not, however, destroy or controul the free agency and responsibility of Man; and should not be allowed, therefore to operate towards relaxing or diverting our stedfast endeavours to keep the faith in all Christian patience and perseverance, even unto the end of our Lives: since no true Believer can presume to suppose his labour of love in the Cause of CHRIST, and as some acknowledgment and return for the Inestimable Benefits Received through Him, fulfilled, so long, as by the continuance of his Being here, he can prove the sincerity of his love towards his REDEEMER. Neither should Any abandon in despair the hope of obtaining Pardon and Reconciliation through The DIVINE INTERCESSOR, however great may have been his past offendings against both GOD and Man: since to The LORD, our GOD, Belong Mercies and Forgivenesses, and with Him is Plenteous Redemption: and though our Lives past may have manifested much of the vices of the Prodigal and Profligate, and have classed us but too justly amongst the Rebels and Unbelievers, and all but Reprobates; yet if, in the spirit of deep contrition and heartfelt sorrow, under a just sense of our ingratitude and unworthiness, we prostrate ourselves at the Foot of the Cross of CHRIST, and view Him as There Suffering the Extremity of Woe for the very Object of Expiating the sins of penitent Believers, we may rise from that posture in the justifiable hope, that our sins are Blotted out, and that our iniquities will be Remembered no more. And then may the garments of our mourning be exchanged for those of rejoicing, and we may look forward in quietness and Assurance of Peace, that having become Engrafted on CHRIST, we, through the Further Efficacy of His Merits and Righteousness Put forth on our behalf, may hope to live where He is on The Throne of His Glory, clinging to the Footstool of That Throne, contemplating the varying Expression of our DIVINE SAVIOUR'S Countenance, and feasting perpetually on the Wisdom and Love ever Proceeding from Him; whilst partaking also with Angels and the Spirits of the Just, made Perfect, in a communion of Joy, such as the eye of Mortal hath not seen, nor the ear heard; neither hath it entered into the heart of Man to conceive: and Which Scenes of Blessedness GOD hath, for CHRIST'S Sake, Prepared for All, that eventually love Him.—1 Cor. ii, 9, 10; Heb. xi, 13, 16.

To faith, we are admonished to add virtue: and the Reasons here assigned for the Distribution of Everlasting Rewards and Punishments by Him, Who is The Way and The Life and The Light, as also The Universal JUDGE, are the observance or neglect of the Christian duties of charity upon perfect and unostentatious and unassuming Christian Principles, the relief of the Neccessitous

from a spirit of Brotherly or Sisterly love. And Wonderful, indeed, is the undesecured descent of the Mercy of our Almighty CREATOR, Who, Giving us All things freely to enjoy, without money and without price, yet Accepts the appropriation of only a part, and that a very insignificant part, towards the relief of others of our Fellow-Creatures, from a motive of pure benevolence, as an act of love towards Himself, Who Gave, and might Take away; Annexing to it the estimable Return of His Unceasing Love in The KINGDOM of His Glory. It is with Such as shew mercy that The LORD is Well Pleased; and the fast, or occasional self-privation, which He hath Acknowledged to be Acceptable unto Him, He thus Interrogatively Describes, "*Is it not, to deal thy bread to the hungry; and that thou bring the Poor, that are cast out, to thy house? When thou seest the Naked, that thou cover him? And that thou hide not thyself from mine own flesh?*" And to the consolation and encouragement of Those, who by their Lives answer and act affirmatively, He Adds, "*Then shall thy light break forth as the morning; and thine health shall spring forth speedily; and thy righteousness shall go before thee: The Glory of The LORD shall be thy Reward.*"—Isa. lviii, 7, 8.

From another Prophet we learn, as The Word of The LORD, "*If a Man is just, and do that which is lawful and right; and hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the Naked with a garment; hath walked in My Statutes, and hath kept My Judgments, to deal truly! He is just; he shall surely live,*" Saith the LORD.—Ezek. xviii, 5. 7 to 9.

*Pure Religion and undefiled before GOD and The FATHER,* (said One of the favourite Disciples of The PRINCE of Peace, The COUNSELLOR, The Lightly GOD,) *is this, To visit the Fatherless and Widows in their affliction, and keep unspotted from the World.*—James i, 27.

How sweet to the Spiritual taste is, and will be, especially in the Day of judgment, the recollection of those meals we have shared with the Poor, the hungry after righteousness, and the Destitute! And why then do we deny ourselves, whilst the means are before us and within our reach, the enjoyment of repasts so beneficial and so permanently gratifying? On the other hand, how bitter and nauseating both in the mouth and in the belly, will, assuredly hereafter, be the remembrance of those gluttonous and wine-bibbing carousals, which, surfeiting the Partakers, left them without the power, and found them without the disposition, to consider feelingly and cheerfully to relieve the pains of famine and the parchings of thirst, that were sorely pressing upon many of their Fellow-Creatures around!!! *Let Brotherly love continue! And be not forgetful to entertain Strangers; for thereby Some have entertained Angels unawares,* said the Inspired Writer in admonition to his Hebrew Brethren, Chapter xiii, 1, 2. And we have the Assurance of The FATHER of Spirits in the Person of His HOLY SON, that though the Stranger, that is helped by us, is not in himself an Angel, yet is he the Representative of A GREATER than angels, even The WORD of GOD; by Whom the Heavens themselves were of old and All the Host of Them. Let us not, therefore, withhold refuge from the Destitute, and then will not GOD Withhold it from us, when we shall assuredly need it, and no other Refuge can be nigh. The Beloved Disciple of CHRIST thus wrote to Gaius, one of the Converts he had, happily for Both, made to the Christian faith: *Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the Brethren and to Strangers; which have borne witness of thy charity before the Church; whom, if thou bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do well; because that for CHRIST'S Name's sake they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles. We ought, therefore, to receive Such, that we might be Fellow-Workers to the Truth:* [3 John, 5 to 8.] thus illustrating what is the most

Acceptable taking in of Strangers; and of which Witness will be borne of them, that do hereafter, to their Everlasting Exaltation, before Angels amidst the Assembly of Saints, when all things and the secrets of all Hearts shall be Revealed. Having so learnt CHRIST, let us apply that knowledge to our hearts, and lay out the talent, thus Graciously Entrusted with us, to the truest profit! *For he shall have Judgment without Mercy, that hath shewed no mercy: and Mercy rejoiceth against Judgment.* And what (as the Apostle feelingly and forcibly asks,) *doth it profit, though a Man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can Faith (such Faith,) save him? If a Brother or Sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and One of you say unto them, "Depart in peace; be ye warmed and filled!" notwithstanding ye give them not those things, which are needful to the Body, What doth it profit? Even so Faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.*—James ii, 13 to 17. For the visitations, which in Christian love and charity, Onesiphorous made to St. Paul when in prison, the short, but fervent and, doubtless, effectual prayer of that holy Apostle, was poured forth to their Common FATHER in Heaven, and has lived on record, and will continue to do so unto the end of the World, when That Phial, which is filled with the prayers of Saints, shall pour forth its holy treasures: *The LORD Give Mercy unto the House of Onesiphorous; for he oft refreshed me; and was not ashamed of my chain.*—2 Tim. i, 16. But A GREATER than Paul is here; and though it be a Sinner, that we visit, and not a Saint, yet if we go unto him in the spirit of Christian love and fellowship, and from a willingness to relieve his temporal and, still more, his Spiritual necessities, we shall be following our SAVIOUR'S Rule and Line of Conduct, and may hope, through the Efficacy of His Intercession, to share in the Rewards which He has Promised: for *He, Who is The Way and The Truth and The Life, hath Said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto One of the Least of These, My Brethren, ye have done it unto Me."* The Wisest of Men, through the power of discernment that was in him, as the Gift of The SPIRIT of GOD, declared, *That he, who oppresseth the Poor, reproacheth his MAKER: but he, that honoureth Him, hath mercy on the Poor:* [Prov. xiv, 31.] and again, *He, that hath pity on the Poor, lendeth unto The LORD; and that, which he hath given, will He Pay him again.*—Prov. xix, 17.

See the observations on Chapter x, 42; and the references to Mark ix, 41, and Heb. vi, 10, there made.

△ If it be in the power of words to awaken the mind of Man to take heed unto his ways, and to depart from evil, surely These Words, (Issuing from The AUTHOR and FINISHER of our faith, The Merciful REDEEMER, The JUDGE of Quick and Dead, Who so Loved us as to Give Himself for us, A Sacrificial Expiation for our sins, The JUST for the Unjust,) "*Depart from Me, ye Cursed, into Everlasting Fire, Prepared for the Devil and his Angels!*" are Calculated to Produce That Effect. As fire occasions the most agonizing torture to the Body, so is it chosen as the faint image of the instrument of torture in the State of Condemned Spirits, where is Reserved, in Satisfaction of DIVINE Justice, a Hell of Woe, that no words can describe, no imagination reach: a conscience stung with all the piercings of remorse, anguish, and despair: a melancholy, without the insensibility of madness to relieve it, may form, in idea, the nearest approach to that state of Eternally lost Souls: and this experience of suffering will be inconceivably increased by the consideration of the Pure and Peaceful and Blissful State, from Which the Outcasts from DIVINE Grace are Excluded; but Which they might for ever have shared, had not their own perverseness and folly set it at nought, when It was fully within their reach, as freely Offered to them through the Love of CHRIST. And what is the inducement for such a Sacrifice? the feeding and pampering of low and base, sordid,

sensual and selfish passions of our worst Nature; withholding also from Others, as well as ourselves, both the Means of Grace and the Associated Hope of Heavenly Glory. Let us, therefore, say, whilst we have the power of saying it, in the spirit of the holy Psalmist, *Depart from me, all ye Workers of iniquity!* [Ps. vi, 8.] and let us apply the mandate also to every evil disposition within ourselves; and, on the contrary, cultivate, by a prayerful spirit, every thought and purpose of good, to which The Holy Scriptures and the HOLY SPIRIT will assuredly Guide us.

[See the observations on Chapter vii, 23; xiii, 40 to 42.]

To witness the sufferings of a Fellow-Creature, to have the ability to relieve, and yet to withhold the means, and to withhold them for the criminal gratification of our sensual affections and lusts, is a conduct that must exclude all reasonable or justifiable expectation of Commiseration, when the Day of Calamity overtakes us, as assuredly it will when That of Universal Judgment Arrives. Whilst, therefore, the day of Probation is Extended to us, let us be wise and consider our latter end! and do the Will of our Heavenly FATHER, that The SON of His Love may Plead for us and Advocate our cause, and Obtain both Pardon and Peace to our Souls.

*Whoso mocketh the Poor, reproacheth his MAKER; and he, that is glad at calamities, shall not be unpunished.*—Prov. xvii, 5. The CREATOR of All, Looks on All as His Children; and He would have Brotherly love prevail amongst All: and Such, as withhold it, does He Regard as withholding the performance of an Enjoined duty by Him, and a Service Acceptable to Him. He will, therefore, when the day of temporal distinction shall close, and there shall be but Two Divisions amongst Mankind, into Good and Evil, into Such as served The LORD, and Such as served Him not, Cast out all Those, who shut up the bowels of compassion towards their poor and ignorant and suffering Brethren; and will Exclude them from the Pale of Salvation as unnatural and disobedient and rebellious Children, and will Discard them from a participation in That Mercy, Which CHRIST Descended to Man's Nature, in the Extremity of DIVINE Compassion, to Procure for Man; since they, though DIVINELY Admonished, both by Precept and Example, to *be merciful*, pertinaciously *refused to shew mercy*.

*To Saul, when breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the Disciples of The LORD, That Same LORD Said, "I am JESUS, Whom thou persecutest!"*—Acts ix, 1. 5. The Blessed REDEEMER thus not only in His Life, but after His Death, Condescendingly and graciously Identified Himself with His faithful Followers, and, doubtless, still Continues So to Do; and as we deal towards the Objects of His Love and Care, may we expect Him to Deal Bountifully and Mercifully, or otherwise, towards us.

Sharp and poignant as may here be the visitations of bodily sufferings, and the still more piercing wounds of the Spirit, yet, where Faith prevails, they are endurable and endured without murmuring, from the confidence that with this Life, at least, those sufferings will end, and be succeeded, if the Christian's Hope be true, (and what true Christian can doubt it?) by a State, where sorrow and sighing shall flee away, and where suffering cannot come. Even amidst the fullest measure of temporal calamity, there are intervals of mitigated pain, if not of positive freedom from it, which communicate, comparatively, a present consolation: and the very act of patience under suffering, from a sense of the Justice of The DIVINE Dispensation, and the Merciful Infliction of it for the mere moment of our existence here, instead of Reserving it unto the Eternity that is to follow, is calculated to fill the Soul with that Peace, which passeth the understanding of All, that know not CHRIST, and which the World can as little

give by its favours as it can take away by its frowns. But to go into Everlasting Punishment; to be driven in despair from the Glories of His Presence, unto Whom is Given All Power both in Heaven and Earth, because we loved that which is at enmity with Him, though He so Loved us as to Give Himself for us, that if we had had repentance working, through faith in Him, unto obedience in holiness, we might have found Mercy; to be cast out with a hunger for Righteousness, when the Season for Plenty is gone by, and Famine, universal and eternal, of the Word of GOD is before us; to have no prospects but those of barrenness and desolation, no reflections but those of Self-condemnation and remorse; to have no Companions but Such as increase instead of lessening by division and sympathy, the measure of our woe, is a State to which it can scarcely be credible that Man would bring himself, if he would deliberately and perseveringly set it before his eyes, and weigh, seriously, the Ready Means Which The SON of GOD hath Set before him, *to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with GOD.*

Of that Endless Torment of Body and of Soul, which awaits the Impenitent and Unbelieving, who reject the Free Offers of Grace, and knowingly and daringly make themselves amenable to The DIVINE Displeasure, the Prophet Daniel speaks as a State of confusion and disgrace, drawing an attractive comparison with its opposite, saying, *Of them, that sleep in the dust of the Earth, Some shall awake to Everlasting Life, and Some to Shame and Everlasting Contempt! And They, that be wise, shall shine as the brightness of the Firmament, and They, that turn Many to Righteousness, as the Stars for Ever and Ever.*—Dan. xii, 2, 3.

In the Record Given of The Gospel of JESUS CHRIST by His Favourite Disciple, The Same DIVINE TEACHER is represented, on another occasion, to have thus Adverted to the Awful Judgment of the Last and Great Day of Assize: *"Verily, Verily, I Say unto you, He that heareth My Word, and believeth on Him, That Sent Me, hath Everlasting Life; and shall not come into Condemnation, but is Passed from Death unto Life. Verily, Verily, I Say unto you, The Hour is Coming, and now is, when the Dead shall hear the Voice of The SON of GOD: and they, that hear, shall live. For, as The FATHER hath Life in Himself, So hath He Given to The SON to have Life in Himself: and hath Given Him Authority to Execute Judgment also; because He is The SON of Man. Marvel not at This! For the Hour is Coming, in the Which All, that are in the graves, shall hear His Voice, and shall come forth: They, that have done good, unto the Resurrection of Life: and They, that have done evil, unto the Resurrection of Damnation!"*—John v, 24 to 29.

St. Paul also speaks of That Day as *The Day of Wrath and Revelation of the Righteous Judgment of GOD, Who will Render to every Man according to his deeds: to Them, who, by patient continuance in well doing, seek for Glory and Honour and Immortality, Eternal Life! But unto Them, that are contentious and do not obey the Truth, but obey unrighteousness, Indignation and Wrath, Tribulation and Anguish, upon every Soul of Man, that doeth evil: but Glory, Honour, and Peace to every One that worketh good: to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile; for there is no Respect of Persons with GOD: for as Many, as have sinned without Law, shall also perish without Law; and as Many, as have sinned in the Law, shall be Judged by the Law, in The Day, when GOD shall Judge the secrets of Men by JESUS CHRIST.*—Rom. ii, 5 to 12. 16.

—When They, that have offended past Forgiveness, as the Impenitent and Reprobate, will descend into Hell, into the Fire that never shall be quenched; where their worm dieth not, and the Fire is not quenched.—Mark ix, 43, 44.

And Again may it be asked, "Is it possible that, with These Great Truths

fore us, we can long hesitate which course to take, whether to seek to become Adopted Children of GOD, through the Advocacy of The SON of His Love; to remain the Votaries of this World and the Dupes and Victims of Satan? whether so to regulate our lives and conversation, and bend our thoughts and actions to the Essential Object of obtaining an Eternity of the Purest and most perfect Bliss in the Life to Come; or by limiting our desires, our pleasures and pursuits, to this Life and World only, as if none Other awaited us, sacrifice to usual gratification and the base and degrading passions of our Nature, in this brief span of existence, an Inheritance in Heaven, which fadeth not away, and lay down upon us That Awful Sentence, Which will Consign our undying souls to that immeasurable Weight of Misery and Wretchedness and Want and Grief, of Which All the accumulated afflictions in this present Life are but images, so faint, as to be unequal to the affording any probable conception of what those Eternal Sufferings will prove?" Grant, O GOD, that we may not have so learnt JESUS, as not both to feel and confess that, if we profess to love Him, we should manifest our sincerity in that profession by keeping His Commandments. And as He Himself, when on Earth, did Personally Exemplify as well as Admonish All to do, may we strive earnestly so to do, trusting to the unceasing Operation of His Love to Shelter and Succour and Support us under all trials and difficulties in our Christian warfare; and seeking, in the fervency of Christian faith by prayer, for the Preventing and Prevailing Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT both to Lead and Continue us in That Way of Holiness and Righteousness, of Perfect Faith and Purest Charity, which, through the Protection and the Righteousness of CHRIST, is the only hopeful Approach to the Possessions of Everlasting Peace, amidst the Joys of Angels and of Saints in the visible Glories of The Everlasting GODHEAD; Where the Perfection of DIVINE Wisdom and Love and Power will be Laid Open to us; and Where the contemplation of the Attributes of The DEITY will constitute the employment and delight of our Spiritualized Natures; and Where also, in all the charms of Heavenly Harmony, and in the Gladdening Fellowship of Sacred love, All the sanctified Spirits of the Redeemed, throughout the Range of Creation, will join in celebrating the praises of JEHOVAH, The TRIUNE GOD.

**LAP. XXVI.**—And it came to pass when JESUS had Finished All These Sayings, He Said unto His Disciples, "Ye know that after two days is the Feast of the Passover, and The SON of Man is betrayed to be Crucified."—1, 2.

With all the Foreknowledge that The Incarnate GOD, CHRIST JESUS, and of the dreadful Agony and Sufferings, both in Spirit and in Flesh, that awaited Him, He yet Looked forward to Them with Fortitude; and shrunk not from the Labour of Love and the Kindly Offices of Admonition and Exhortation which the Interval Gave Him the Opportunity of Performing. Having Laid down the Great Doctrines of the Way to Life and Glory Everlasting, He now prepares His Disciples for That Awful and Alarming Event of Himself, as their SHEPHERD, being Smitten; and of them, as the Sheep of His Fold, being scattered abroad: when He, Who was to them Dearer than their life-blood, should Breathe out His Life, amidst the pain and ignominy of Crucifixion. The Disciples knew that the Feast of the Passover was at hand, but they could not bring themselves to believe, (for their faith was not sufficiently strong) or comprehend that Festival, which had been for centuries kept in commemoration of the most Signal Deliverance their Nation had experienced from DIVINE Intervention, was but a Type of an Infinitely more Memorable Deliverance, Which not only their own Nation Spiritually, but All The Families of the Earth should actually experience, by CHRIST, The True MESSIAH, Rescuing them from the

bondage of sin and the grasp of Satan, and by His Opening a Way for them to the Land of Heavenly Inheritance. But for the Accomplishment of Which it was Deemed Indispensable, in the Councils of The MOST HIGH, that The SON of GOD Incarnate should Pour out His Blood in Sacrifice, that by That Blood All, who have faith in His Mediation, might have the stain and pollution of their sins Blotted out. Nor did they suspect that the approaching Feast would be the last, that would be justifiably kept for its avowed Object. They knew that *after two days would be the Feast of the Passover*: but they had not so viewed or consulted Prophecy as to look on JESUS, their PROPHET, PRIEST, and KING, as Himself The Very Paschal LAMB; notwithstanding the Assurance from Himself That this should be. But He was not only to be Crucified by His Enemies, but betrayed by His Friend,—by him to whom His Confidence had been Extended, and to whom the Stores of His Wisdom, Who Spake as never Man spake, had been unsparingly Opened. This now JESUS Told His Followers: yet though He Spoke in the Pure Spirit of Prophecy, and as One having Authority, He Spoke not to the understanding of Any, because their hearts were not then sufficiently Spiritualized; so that they only believed as their carnal or worldly ideas of Spiritual Things had painted Them to their imaginations.

In the Gospel according to St. Mark, the narrative is not made expressly to apply by JESUS Himself to His Approaching Crucifixion, merely alluding to the Passover generally; referring in continuation to the conspiracy of the Priests and Scribes against the Life of JESUS, but with a determination on their part to postpone the execution of their plot, till after the Feast, from a dread of the People: *After two days was the Feast of the Passover and of Unleavened Bread.*—Chap. xiv, 1. So also St. Luke: *Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread drew nigh, which is called "The Passover."*—Chap. xxii, 1. In like manner saith St. John: *And the Jews' Passover was nigh at hand.*—Chap. xi, 55.

The two Evangelists, St. Matthew and St. John, speak of the Feast as that of the Passover; St. Mark as the Feast of the Passover and of *Unleavened Bread*; and St. Luke as The Feast of Unleavened Bread, which is called "The Passover." All, in effect, agreeing, but shewing, amidst numberless other instances, by the variety of expression, that there was no studied and combined plan of narrative amongst them; but that Truth was the Polar Star that influenced them and their object equally, though with little diversity of incidents, perfectly natural from the different impressions, which different Natures receive from secondary and minor circumstances. The origin of this commemorative as well as symbolic Sacrifice, is thus described in Its principal features: *The LORD Spake unto Moses and Aaron in the Land of Egypt, Saying, "This month shall be unto you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you. Speak ye unto all the Congregation of Israel, saying, 'In the tenth day of this month they shall take in them every Man a lamb according to the house of their Fathers: Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats; and ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole Assembly of the Congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening: and they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts, and on the upper door post of the houses wherein they shall eat it; and they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. And thus shall ye eat it, with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste. It is The LORD'S Passover." For I will Pass through the Land of Egypt this night, and will smite All the First-Born in the Land of Egypt, both Man and Beast: and against all*

*the Gods of Egypt I will Execute Judgment! I am The LORD! And the blood shall be to you for a Token upon the houses, where ye are: and when I See the blood, I will Pass over you; and the Plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I Smite the Land of Egypt. And this Day shall be unto you for a Memorial: and ye shall keep It a Feast to The LORD throughout your Generations: ye shall keep It a Feast by an Ordinance for ever.*"—Exo. xii, 1 to 3. 5 to 8. 11 to 14.

Great as was the Occasion for thankfulness in That DIVINE Deliverance from Temporal bondage, by an Interposition so Marvellous and Signally Afflictive on the Instruments of Israel's sufferings; and becoming, as it was, in succeeding Generations to look back upon the Record of That Beneficial Event, as Affording them One, amongst various Proofs, of the Mercy and Power of GOD Exerted on behalf of His Chosen People, and to regard It as an Earnest of future Protection and Deliverance, whenever Faith was the Principle and Obedience was the practice of the Children of Israel: yet A Greater Deliverance, and One of Far More Comprehensive Operation, than from Egyptian bondage, was here Typified,—A Deliverance of All Mankind from the bondage of sin, and from the servitude of a harder Task-Master than Pharaoh, even Satan, the Prince of Darkness and Promoter of all deceivableness and subtlety and never-ending cruelty. A LAMB, indeed, without blemish, was to be Slain; and His Body and Blood were to be figuratively eaten and taken in all succeeding Generations of the World, to commemorate A Sacrifice, by Which, in the Mystery of DIVINE Love and Mercy, The CREATOR of Man Himself Bare Man's iniquities; and in Sufferings Adequate to the Satisfaction of DIVINE Justice, though utterly inconceivable in Their full Extent to Human imagination, Atoned for the sins of His Own Creatures, that They, who vitally believe in and adopt such faith, in the spirit of devoutest and enduring thankfulness, might be Blessed with The DIVINE Pardon and Reconciliation; being Released from the captivity of Satan, and the terrors of Death, and having the Promised Land of the Spiritual Canaan Opened to them; Where not only the Wicked cease from troubling, and the Weary are at rest, but Where The LAMB of GOD, Restored to the Glories of The FATHER, will Receive them, with the Acclamations of Angels, to a Participation in the Fruits of His Victory over Sin and Death and Hell; and Where they shall be Blessed with the Fulness of the Gifts and Graces of His Free SPIRIT, and be Likened unto Him in the Perfection of His Incarnation. The Blood of the INNOCENT was Shed for the Guilty, as was Typified by the Sacrifices Commanded by the Law: *for without shedding of blood was there no Remission of sins*; and by the Blood Shedding of CHRIST, The Great ANTITYPE, did The LORD Pass over the guilt of His penitent and believing Creatures, so Purified and Presented unto Him.

The SON of Man betrayed to be Crucified!!! And is it possible that GOD should Have Such Love for Man, when Man has so little true love for himself, and so much of thoughtlessness, irreverence, and ingratitude towards his MAKER? And is, indeed, the heart of Man so hardened, or insensate as to be without any feeling of Compunction at its ungracious dealings towards so Gracious A CREATOR? Do we not freely censure the infatuated folly of Those, who crucified Bodily The LORD of Life? And how little do we regard our own crucifixion of Him afresh by every act of rebellion or disobedience, and by every instance of impenitence and neglect? Do we, as assuredly we ought to do, strive to awaken our minds to the conviction that every error of our Lives, every evil thought, whether ripened into action or not, and every word or work, hostile to His Doctrine, or in rejection of His Authority, added to the Agonies He Endured in His SPIRIT, when He, for our sakes, as well as for the sake of All of Human Kind in general, was Brought to the hour and



power of Darkness? This consideration of the imminent danger we have ourselves been in of dying everlastingly to Peace, and this conviction of the only hope we can justly entertain of arriving at that condition of pure and permanent Happiness, being grounded and built up in CHRIST and His Intercession, should be continually present with us. And though we may thence have sorrow of heart for a season, yet will it be succeeded by a Joy, which no Man taketh from us; and will influence us to crucify in ourselves the affections and the lust, which Satan and our own folly have excited within us, and induce us to take up the Cross, and follow Him, Who was Patient unto the end, and Who Alone is The Way, the Truth, and the Life.

△ Then assembled together the Chief Priests, and the Scribes, and the Elders of the People unto the Palace of the High Priest, who was called Caiaphas: and consulted that they might take JESUS by subtlety, and kill Him! But they said, "Not on the Feast Day, lest there be an uproar among the People!"—3 to 5.

As one proof of the Truth of CHRIST'S Gospel, even the Great and Mighty Ones of the Earth, though opposed to It, were obliged to use secrecy in their machinations against It; for the People, generally, felt and acknowledged Its DIVINE Origin. Inflated with Spiritual pride, and jealous of any interference with their fancied and perverted privileges, the Priests, alarmed lest their hypocrisy should be unveiled, and lest pure and undefiled Religion should be substituted for the traditions and doctrines, with which the credulity of the People had hitherto been deceived, they found themselves unequal to the task of openly confuting the irresistible Force of Truth, and, therefore, determined on the destruction of Its Gracious AUTHOR and ADVOCATE. They would not, in obedience to, or observance of, Gamaliel's advice, let The ALMIGHTY, as it were, Decide for them on the New Doctrine, whether It was Human or DIVINE; neither would they endeavour, by dispassionate investigation, to get at the real Character of, and a just comparison between, the two Systems. They feared for the overthrow of their temporal power; and in the blindness of their zeal to obtain for that, continuance at any sacrifice, they considered not, or rather disregarded, that they were daring the Displeasure of The ALMIGHTY, and opposing That SPIRITUAL Church, against Which the devices of Man or of Satan shall not ultimately prevail. Though professing to serve GOD, and to promote the true welfare of His People, they were so conscious of not meaning them good in this instance, that though bent upon the hellish purpose of murdering the Holy JESUS, they deferred its execution, lest the common People, who heard Him gladly and so justly revered Him, should rise to His Rescue, and confirm His Power in the ruin of their own. And what are all premeditated acts of iniquity but conspiracies against the Power, Which CHRIST is Willing, and should be gratefully permitted, for our Everlasting Interests, to Have and Exercise over us, that we may be His Chosen Servants, and may serve Him freely with all our hearts? But though there may be a readiness in us to condemn the conspiracy of the Jews against The LORD of Life, yet the heart is so deceitful, that it often sets the World, and the Things of the World, above GOD, and overlooks the Heavenly Call, and seems neither to need A SAVIOUR, nor to heed the Offer of The SPIRIT! And though hypocrisy may influence to the covering over from the eye of Man such aversion of the heart from GOD; yet assuredly doth The LORD, Who Looketh upon the heart, Know and will Lay open its hypocrisy and folly even to itself in the Day of Judgment.

The narrative given of this by St. Mark is thus: *And the Chief Priests and the Scribes sought how they might take JESUS by craft; and put Him to death.*

*But they said, "Not on the Feast-day, lest there be an uproar of the People."*—Chap. xiv, 1, 2.

St. Luke is less particular: *And the Chief Priest and Scribes sought how they might kill JESUS; for they feared the People.*—Chap. xxii, 2.

But All agree in the rancorous hostility of the Priests and Scribes against The Great High PRIEST of GOD, and in their cowardly dread of the honest indignation of the Common People bursting forth in The Holy JESU'S Cause, and of thence having the sword of vengeance turned upon themselves. But, alas! within ourselves, by a little figurative application, may be found some resemblance to these opposing and seemingly inconsistent influences; our self-will, our inordinate ambition, our love of dominion and aim at distinction, our eager and unsubdued spirit of wordly enterprise, and devotedness to worldly and sensual objects, and, above all, our supposed self-righteousness and Spiritual pride, are the Priests and Scribes and Elders' conspiring in our hearts against the Promptings of The HOLY SPIRIT to our Souls; and the zealous affection of the simple-hearted and well-disposed People is pictured in the dictates and chidings of our conscience, when consulted in unison with the Revealed Will of GOD.

What thus happened to The SON of David in the Flesh, did David himself, through The SPIRIT, thus Foretell: *The Kings of the Earth set themselves, and the Rulers take counsel together against The LORD, and against His ANOINTED.*—Ps. ii, 2. And this Prophecy, so fully verified, the Psalmist made instrumental to the most prudent and pious admonition: *Be wise now, therefore, O ye Kings! Be instructed ye Judges of the Earth! Serve The LORD with fear; and rejoice with trembling! Kiss The SON, lest He be Angry, and ye perish from the Way, when His Wrath is Kindled but a little: Blessed are all They, that put their trust in Him!*—Ps. ii, 10 to 12.

According to St. John, This Incident in the Gospel History is thus related: *Then gathered the Chief Priests and Pharisees a Council, and said, "What do we? For this Man doeth many miracles! If we let him thus alone, all Men will believe on him, and the Romans shall come and take away both our Place and Nation! And One of them, named Caiaphas, being the High Priest that same year, said unto them, "Ye know nothing at all; nor consider that it is expedient for us, that One Man should die for the People; and that the whole Nation perish not." And this spake he, not of himself; but being High Priest that year, he prophesied that JESUS should die for that Nation, and not for that Nation only; but that also He should Gather together in One the Children of GOD, that were scattered abroad. Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put Him to death.*—Chap. xi, 47 to 53.

Thus did they themselves acknowledge that CHRIST was Attended with one Attribute of DEITY, that of Working Miracles; and that the nature of the Miracles Wrought by Him was such, as is Recorded of Him; having Benevolence for their Motive, and Beneficence for their End, and naturally, therefore, drawing towards The SOURCE, Whence They Issued, from unprejudiced Minds, adoration and reverence, and that faith, which worketh love. And yet so Benignant a Mission did these selfish and proud Pharisees, unconsciously the Instruments of Satan, seek to terminate, and to uproot Its Blissful and Gracious Effects by the Destruction of The MESSIAH Himself. In the office of Caiaphas as exercised by him, we have an instance of the truth of St. Paul's position, that, *though Gifted with the Spirit of Prophecy, and though we may understand all Mysteries and all Knowledge, yet if we have not charity, it is nothing worth; we are, as far as respects our Spiritual state, but as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.* Caiaphas knew that The MESSIAH was to Suffer,

and that His Sufferings were Necessary to the Nations' Salvation ; but he would not know, because his Spiritual pride had hid from him that Knowledge, that though offences must needs come, Woe awaiteth them, by whom they did come. He sat in arbitrary and despotic judgment on The LORD of Life, to Cut Him off from the Land of the Living, as he vainly supposed : instead of exulting in His Presence and hailing Him as The KING of Kings, and SAVIOUR, not only of Israel, but of the World. Had his mind been unfiled ~~with~~ <sup>from</sup> prejudice, he would have looked on JESUS with the meekness, the humility, and the devotedness of One, on whom The Day-Spring from On HIGH had Beamed ; and to whom the Blessed Tidings of Salvation had been Brought. But, though even the High Priest of the Jews, of whose Nation The MESSIAH was, would not so know CHRIST, we know and gratefully acknowledge that CHRIST then Came in the Flesh, and Came to Draw All of All Generations unto Him, who, through Him, have faith to be Saved, and who have the hope, in meekness, of being Lifted up Whither He has Ascended, and of being Surrounded with His Everlasting Glories. Let us, therefore, with the People, who first witnessed His Miracles, and had faith to rest their Salvation on his Incarnation and Intercession as The SON of GOD, believe on Him and trust to Him as The ROCK of our Salvation ; and, in stedfast imitation of His Bright and Patient Example, endure, for His Sake, any persecutions or trials of faith we may be Called upon to undergo, even unto Death, in the hope and humble confidence that He will Obtain for us a Crown of Life ! The same Gracious Influence on the hearts of the Humble and on the Zealous for instruction in the Truth, continued to manifest itself, when the Disciples of The Great TEACHER were themselves the Instructors ; and a like spirit of obstinate and malignant rejection of Gospel Light, in defiance, equally, of sound reason as of DIVINE Revelation, shewed itself toward those Disciples. For when Peter and John worked the cure on the impotent Man at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple ; and as they spake unto the People, the Priests and the Captain of the Temple and the Sadducees came upon them ; being grieved that they taught the People and preached, through JESUS, the Resurrection from the Dead : and they laid hands on them, and put them in hold. Howbeit Many of them, which heard the Word, believed. And it came to pass, that their Rulers and Elders and Scribes, and Annas, the High Priest, and Caiaphas, and John and Alexander, and as Many as were of the Kindred of the High Priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem : and when they had set them in the midst, they asked " By what Power, or by what Name have ye done this ? " Then Peter, Filled with The HOLY GHOST, said unto them, " Ye Rulers of the People and Elders of Israel, if we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent Man ; by what means is he made whole ? Be it known unto you All, and to all the People of Israel, that by The Name of JESUS CHRIST of Nazareth, Whom ye Crucified, Whom GOD Raised from the Dead, even by Him, doth this Man stand here before you whole : THIS is The STONE, Which was set at nought of you Builders, Which is Become The HEAD of the Corner : neither is there Salvation in Any Other : for there is none other Name under Heaven Given among Men, Whereby we must be Saved ! " Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant Men, they marvelled ; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with JESUS ; and beholding the Man which was healed, standing with them, they could say nothing against it. But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the Council, they conferred among themselves, saying, " What shall we do to these Men ? For that indeed a notable Miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them, that dwell in Jerusalem ; and we cannot deny it : but that it spread no further amongst the People, let us straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no

*Man in this Name."* And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all, nor teach in The Name of JESUS. But Peter and John answered, and said unto them, "Whether it be right in the Sight of GOD to hearken unto you, more than unto GOD, judge ye? For we cannot but speak the Things, Which we have seen and heard!" So when they had further threatened them, they let them go; finding nothing how they might punish them, because of the People: for all Men glorified GOD for That which was Done. And being let go, they went to their own Company, and reported all that the Chief Priests and Elders had said unto them. And when they had heard that, they lifted up their voice to GOD with one accord, and said, "LORD, Thou art GOD, Which hast Made Heaven and Earth, and the Sea, and All that in them is! Who, by the Mouth of Thy Servant David, hath Said, [in Ps. ii, 1,] 'Why did the Heathen rage, and the People imagine vain things? The Kings of the Earth stood up, and the Rulers were gathered together against The LORD and against His CHRIST.'"—Acts iv, 1 to 26. But the same Apostle on the same occasion (after having, in the spirit of Christian hope and Charity, attributed to ignorance the act both of the People and their Governors in the Crucifixion of CHRIST,) thus invoked their contrition: *Now, Brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, (as did also your Rulers,) which GOD before had shewed by the mouth of all His Prophets, that CHRIST should Suffer, He hath so Fulfilled. Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out!*—Acts iii, 17 to 19.

Now when JESUS was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the Leper, there came unto Him a Woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on His Head, as He Sat at meat. But when His Disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, "To what purpose is this waste? for this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the Poor!" When JESUS Understood it, He Said unto them, "Why trouble ye the Woman? For she hath wrought a good Work upon Me. For ye have the Poor always with you: But Me ye have not always! For in that she hath poured this ointment on My Body, she did it for My Burial. Verily, I Say unto you, Whosoever This Gospel shall be Preached in the whole World, there shall also This, that this Woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her."—6 to 13.

THE SON of GOD Himself, The CREATOR of All Things, and The REDEEMER of Mankind, though the foxes have holes and the birds of the Air have nests, had not where to Lay His Head; and took Refuge in the house of a Leper; and yet, when under the impulse of reverential love and gratitude only, some ointment was offered to Him, as incense, His very Disciples rebuked the act, complaining of it as a wasteful application, and urging the wants of the Poor as of Paramount claim and title to attention, to the Honour of Him, Who Came to Preach The Tidings of Salvation to the Poor, and, Thereby, Enrich them with Treasures infinitely beyond what the World could give them.

The narrative of This Incident, as given by St. Mark, is as follows: *And JESUS, being in Bethany, in the house of Simon the Leper, as He Sat at meat, there came a Woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard, very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on His Head. And there were Some, that had indignation within themselves, and said, "Why was this waste of the ointment made? For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence; and have been given to the Poor!" And they murmured against her. And JESUS Said, "Let her alone! Why trouble ye her? She hath wrought a good Work on Me: For ye have the Poor with you always; and, whensoever ye will, ye may do them good. But Me ye have not always. She hath done what she could; she is come aforehand to anoint My Body to the Burying. Verily, I Say unto you, Whosoever This Gospel shall be Preached throughout the whole World, This also, that she hath done, shall be spoken of for a memorial of her."*—Mark xiv, 3 to 9.

The following description from St. Luke may have reference to another Character and another occasion, but is somewhat analogous and very affecting: *And One of the Pharisees desired JESUS, that He would Eat with him: and He Went into the Pharisee's house, and Sat down to meat. And, behold, a Woman in the City, which was a Sinner, when she knew that JESUS Sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, and stood at His Feet behind Him weeping; and began to wash His Feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed His Feet, and anointed Them with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee, which had bidden Him, saw it, he spake within himself, saying, "This Man, if he were a Prophet, would have known who and what manner of Woman this is that touched Him: for she is a Sinner!" And JESUS Answering, Said unto him, "Simon, I have Somewhat to Say unto thee!" And he saith, "Master, say on!" "There was a certain Creditor, which had two Debtors: the One owed five hundred pence, and the Other fifty; and when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them Both. Tell Me, therefore, Which of them will love him most?" Simon answered, and said, "I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most." And He Said unto him, "Thou hast rightly judged." And He Turned to the Woman, and Said unto Simon, "Seest thou this Woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest Me no water for My Feet! But she hath washed My Feet with tears, and wiped Them with the hairs of her head! Thou gavest Me no kiss; but this Woman, since the time I Came in, hath not ceased to kiss My Feet! My Head with oil thou didst not anoint; but this Woman hath anointed My Feet with ointment! Wherefore I Say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are Forgiven; for she loved much. But to whom little is Forgiven, the Same loveth little." And He Said unto her, "Thy sins are Forgiven!" And they, that sat at meat with Him, began to say within themselves, "Who is This, that Forgiveth sins also?" And He Said to the Woman, "Thy faith hath saved thee: go in Peace!"—Chap. vii, 36 to 50.*

△ The Evangelist St. John speaks of an occurrence very similar, but, as it is believed, in which a different Mary took the prominent part, with equal devotedness and adoration. Indeed this Incident in the Private Life, as it were, of JESUS, occurred some days before the Other. And it is probable, from the rumour which may have been spread abroad of This, the penitent Mary may have determined to follow the good example of the pious Mary, with the only difference, that as the Sister of Lazarus poured the precious ointment upon the Feet of JESUS, the other Mary poured hers upon His Head. The Former (Lazarus's Sister,) in her own house; The Latter in the house of Simon, who knew the sinfulness of her previous habits, if he had not contributed to them: and Simon's observation that JESUS could not have known the character of Mary then present, is utterly inapplicable to that of Lazarus's Mary, with whom JESUS was particularly Intimate, having oft times Resorted to their house: JESUS, six days before the Passover, Came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, which had been dead; whom He Raised from the Dead: there they (Mary and Martha, the Sisters of Lazarus,) made Him a supper, and Martha served: but Lazarus was One of them, that sat at the table with Him. Then took Marys pound of ointment of spikenard very costly, and anointed the Feet of JESUS, and wiped His Feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment. Then saith One of His Disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's Son, which should betray Him, "Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the Poor?" This he said, Not that he cared for the Poor; but because he was a Thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein. Then Said JESUS, "Let her alone: against the Day of My Burying hath she kept this: for the Poor always ye have with you; but Me ye have not always!"—Chap. xii, 1 to 8.

In this short portion of Gospel History many Circumstances present themselves especially calculated equally to interest and instruct: first, The Association of The Meek and Sinless CHRIST with a Publican and Sinner: second, according to St. Luke, the absence of all flattery or reserve of opinion on the character of the Host himself: third, the nature of the leprosy affecting Simon, and the union of Spiritual apathy with physical infirmity: fourth, the fervency of penitence and devotedness manifested by the sinful Female, and the holy love and gratitude associated with them: fifth, the mistaken estimate set, even by the comparatively Good, on the riches and costly possessions of this World: sixth, the outward anointing or purifying of the body to be but an emblem of That Unction from The HOLY ONE, of Which the Soul stands far more in need, that it may, on the approach of Death, be embalmed in Heavenward Peace, and may, at the Resurrection, unite with the Glorified Body: seventh, the becoming labour of love, in which they engage, who contribute, as they are Gifted with power and opportunity, towards procuring for or dispensing to Others a Portion of That Essential Unction: eighth, the evil surmisings and persecuting remonstrances to which they expose themselves from the false Professors of Religion, and from those, who have the form of godliness without the power thereof: ninth, the way in which a service may be rendered to CHRIST, so as not only to be Accepted of Him, but to draw from Him the unspeakable Fruits of Righteousness: tenth, to assist, most effectually, in our Generation the Poor, and especially the Poor in Spirit, is most highly to honour the Word of Him, Who Preached The Gospel to the Poor: eleventh, the Verification of the two Prophecies by CHRIST, of His Approaching Death and Burial, and of the testimony borne by all the Historians of His Life and Conversation, to Such instances of earnest faith and love in the two Marys, who, under the consciousness of owing all things to CHRIST, thus freely poured forth their costly incense to His Honour: and lastly, the duty pointed out for our imitation, and the encouragement that will assuredly attend its performance.

From St. Luke's extension of the Narrative we derive further materials for salutary reflexion in the Parable of the Creditor and his two Debtors, in such different degrees, though alike insolvent, *having nothing to pay*, as influencing to and inculcating in All, by a careful Self-examination, the principles of humility and Self-abasement, and the devotedness of pious gratitude, as their sure and profitable fruit. For what is it that we have, and do not owe to The AUTHOR of All Good? And in all the offerings we make Him, we but give Him, or rather return Him, of His Own.

The comparison of the more acceptable service rendered by the penitent Female to that of the Publican, shews of what little value is hospitality in a worldly sense, unguided by Spiritual motives, or not directed to Spiritual ends; and unaccompanied by the great Christian principle of Brotherly love.

It is of necessity that, while continuing here, the Christian should intermix occasionally with his Fellow-Creatures, though they be such as either doubt or deny the Faith, as it is in JESUS; and this in the irksomeness and painfulness of the office, exposing him, as it too frequently does, to scorn and cruel mockery, if not to more aggravated persecution, constitutes no inconsiderable part of his trial. But his fighting valiantly this fight of faith gives him the most encouraging hope (as evidencing the Grace of GOD Working in him so to will and to do,) that he will be Called to participate in the Final Triumph of The LAMB of GOD. We have here The Great Pattern of all Excellence, Illustrating the possibility of being in the World, and yet not of the World; of compromising no principle by such an intercourse, but, on the contrary, with calmness and dignity avowing the faith, and marking the distinction between Such as serve GOD, and Such as serve Him not.

△ THE SON of GOD, though Bearing the sins of the World, was Himself without sin: but amongst Mankind there is not One, that doeth good continually, no, not One: and, indeed, who can tell how oft he himself offendeth? The Parable of the Pharisee and the Publican, and The DIVINE Assurance of the greater justification of him, who felt that he had nothing of merit to offer, and nothing but Mercy to seek, (through faith, doubtless, in That Stream of Pardon and Reconciliation, the Blood of CHRIST,) than of the Self-satisfied Pharisee, who wrapped himself in his imagined goodness, should teach us to be lowly in our own eyes, and humble in the Sight of GOD, and make us more ready to forgive the sins of Others, than of ourselves, and to promote, in Brotherly or Sisterly charity, the conversion of Others from the error of their ways to the Path that leadeth, by Faith, unto Salvation; rejoicing greatly over every Sinner that repenteth.

If flattery be odious and despicable in temporal matters, it is most especially and offensively, and should be alarmingly so in Spiritual concerns: and to forego an opportunity of just reproof for infidelity or immorality, in deference to Temporal Superiority, or from a backwardness to give offence to Human pride, because Human obligations have been conferred by its Possessor, is to betray the trust, which GOD hath Condescendingly Reposed in us; and to gratify the vanity or to confirm the weakness, at the hazard of the Everlasting Peace of a Fellow-Mortal.

The Mary referred to by St. Luke, had been a grievous Sinner, but on her hearty repentance and sure signs of faith in JESUS, as The FRIEND of such Sinners, her sins, however many, were Forgiven, and her iniquities, however heinous, were Remembered no more; for upon Himself did CHRIST Mercifully Take them. But Simon, though less glaringly an Offender, was more amenable to censure and to punishment, because he fancied himself a just Man, needing no repentance; judging Another to condemnation without mercy, and withholding a just judgment on himself.

The leprosy that most deeply infected him, like that of Gehazi, the Servant of Elisha, was the infection of a moral disease; and it continued to cling to him, because he had not faith to be Saved from it. Though, as a whitened sepulchre without, he heeded not that he was full of corruption within; trusting in his own righteousness, and wilfully hood-winking himself that he should not look into his own Soul, and unveil either its enormities or its imperfections: or contrast it with the regenerated purity of that Spirit, which, evincing a broken and contrite heart, so Acceptable unto GOD, and Esteemed by Him as of great price, sunk into deep Self-condemnation at having caused any additional Suffering to The SON of GOD, in His Sacrificial Offering for the sins of every penitent Believer.

In proportion as our Self-examination is earnestly entered upon and faithfully pursued, and our conduct and motives and principles fairly weighed in the balance, by the Word of GOD and the Precepts and Example of His Blessed SON, shall we find reason to condemn ourselves and bewail the dreadfully degraded and imminently dangerous condition, unto which our neglect or rejection of The DIVINE Commandments has brought us: we shall acknowledge with painfulness the impurities we have been guilty of in thought, word, and deed against the Immortal Principle within us, our undying Souls, which were Given us by Their Almighty and Merciful CREATOR, to be the Inhabitants of His Mansions of Purity and Peace Everlastingly. We shall own, with utter confusion, that the Image, which we were intended to form of The DIVINE Nature and Attributes, has been most sadly and shamefully defaced and disgraced by us, so as to have scarcely the most distant trace of its original condition, when our first Ancestor issued from his MAKER'S Hands. We

shall, under these feelings and reflections, admit that there can be no just or justifiable hope of Forgiveness, where offences have so abounded, and ingratitude has so prevailed, and so little conformity to the Holy Laws of GOD has been manifested. And yet, without Pardon, what hope of Peace can be cherished, and especially the Peace of Heaven, which infinitely surpasseth the utmost imagination of finite Beings? It is, therefore, that the Christian, who is such in sincerity, limits his judgment of condemnation to and discharges it on himself, and thinks None, more than himself, stand in need of repentance. From the depths, therefore, of sorrow at his past life he implores, through the Merits of his REDEEMER, from the Mercy of GOD, That Pardon, which he may effectually plead, when arraigned at the Bar of DIVINE Justice on the Coming Judgment. And in all the earnestness of grateful affection towards The AUTHOR and FINISHER of that Faith, which worketh repentance not to be repented of, and bringeth in the end Salvation and Exaltation unto Glory Everlasting, he bathes, when Spiritually prostrate before the Cross, the Feet of his SAVIOUR with his tears; tears, in which sorrow for offences committed against Him, and joy at the blessed hope of Pardon and Reconciliation mingle together, and, by their union, produce the unspeakable consolation of the hope of a sorrowless Resurrection.

The indignation expressed at the costly offering to The SAVIOUR, though the Inestimable Blessing of the hope of Eternal Life is solely owing to Him, (Who, Rich in All Things, as Over All from the Beginning, yet, for Mankind in general, became Poor,) indicated the sad weakness and darkness of the Human Soul, when unenlightened and uninfluenced by The HOLY SPIRIT, and, on the contrary, yielding to a sordid grovelling calculation of Worldly Objects, little congenial with a just sense of the Immensity of the Debt we all owe to Him, from Whom we have received Life and Light and all Things. To Him we should rejoice to give Glory; this should be the paramount principle of our actions, and, subserviently to it, we should be glad in any opportunity of ministering to the necessity of the Saints.

CHRIST was Anointed to His Burial; and thus Represented by a figure which indicates the necessity of every Follower of His Doctrine being Anointed with the Unction of The HOLY SPIRIT, as an essential Preservation from that moral corruption, which gives Satan, by his instruments of Death and Hell, the power to lay waste our Souls, as the worm riots over the body in the grave: it is This Unction which calms the troubled waters within us, and tranquilizes the fury of our stormy passions: It Subdues us to the working the Will of GOD, through faith in CHRIST JESUS, by Whom it is Obtained for us, as the First Fruits of His Atoning Sacrifice, Whence we are Strengthened to the full performance of the various Relative duties we owe to GOD, our Fellow-Creatures, and ourselves. Without which we cannot be Fitted and Prepared either for the Holiness or the Happiness of Heaven. But let us not mistake, for This Holy Anointing, the treacherous unction of Man's providing!

*They, that turn Many to Righteousness, shall shine as the Stars of the Firmament.* In proportion as the Gift of The SPIRIT is Imparted to us, should we strive to diffuse Its Healing, Animating, Comforting, and Sanctifying Influence to Others: for thus it is that in spirit we anoint our Blessed SAVIOUR Himself, as profitably for our Soul's Salvation, as did Mary Magdalene anoint Him in the Flesh from Spiritual motives, and to her eternal honour: we, thereby, most effectually manifest our devout gratitude and fervent zeal, which are tests of The DIVINE Favour and Adoption of our Souls.

*As friendship with the World is enmity with GOD,* so does devotedness to GOD'S Holy Will and Law draw down upon us the contempt or malice, the hatred



and persecution of an impious and sensual World. But this should by no means deter us from engaging in, nor discourage us from pursuing that, which will make us rich unto Everlasting Life. The World may brand us with fanaticism, and attempt to divert us from our purpose by ridicule or contempt; but if our heart condemn us not, and if, with St. Paul, we conscientiously believe we have The SPIRIT, and strive to conform to the Written Law, as the Revealed Will of GOD, He, Who is Greater than our hearts, and Knoweth all Things, will neither Condemn us, nor Forsake us; but, on the contrary, will assuredly Bring us Peace at the last, and Exalt us to Honour amid the Glories of our SAVIOUR'S Visual Presence. For, not having been ashamed of CHRIST or of His Cross in the Life that is, He will not be Ashamed of us, when He Cometh in the Fulness of His KINGDOM in Triumph, with All the Host of Heaven in His Train; having all Power Given unto Him for the Everlasting Reward of the Faithful in All Ages; and for the Eternal Condemnation of the Spiritually Proud, the Impious, the Hypocrite, and the Blasphemer, whether in word or in work.

*"I am The Way, and The Truth, and The Life, (Said The LORD, our SAVIOUR,) and no One cometh unto The FATHER, but through Me:"* and again, *"He, that honoureth Me, honoureth Him, That Sent Me; and him will I Honour."* To diffuse, therefore, the oil of Spiritual Gladness amongst our Fellows in CHRIST'S Name, and thus, as His Agents, to advance the Coming of His KINGDOM upon Earth; to prepare, both by precept and example, the hearts of Others for the reception of the Uction of DIVINE Grace, and to direct their intellectual eyes to That Heavenly Light, Which, when once received, Shineth more and more unto the Perfect Day, Giving the perpetual glow of Consolation to every Soul of Man within Its Benign Influence, is most effectually to do good and to distribute in that way, and to offer up that Sacrifice with which (as is Declared in the Inspired Epistle to the Hebrews,) GOD is Well Pleased.

The truly Poor are they, who are without the Riches of the Mercies of GOD in CHRIST JESUS; who are void of Grace, and are Strangers to the Covenant of Promise and to the Comforts of The SPIRIT: and it is, in assisting these, (by opening to them the Treasures of a Heavenly Inheritance,) to the acquirement of the attributes of a DIVINE Life in the Soul, that the most Acceptable service is rendered unto The SAVIOUR, Who would have None lost. From our Brethren, who have need of temporal aid or consolation, should we not shut up our bowels of compassion; but, if we witness in our Fellows the absence of that faith, and of that knowledge by which it comes, and do not contribute, as far as may be Permitted us, towards extricating them from a State of such awfulness and imminent peril to their Everlasting Interests, how, may it be ~~asked~~ asked of us, dwelleth the love of GOD in us?

To feed, from Christian motives, them that hunger and thirst in the flesh amidst the privations of Poverty, will not lose its reward; but to feed Such as hunger and thirst after Righteousness, with the Bread of Life Eternal, by dispensing to them, in all Christian charity, the Word of GOD and the Tidings of Redemption, is to insure, in the consequent Love of CHRIST, the most exalted Blessings upon ourselves; and which will be incalculably heightened by witnessing the same Blessedness in Those we may have instrumentally led from destitution to the fulness of the same faith. This is indeed our most Acceptable exercise of the Graces Imparted Mercifully to us, and Entrusted to our Stewardship; and though it be but a duty, and a duty which, to a devout and faithful and fervent heart, it is not difficult to discharge, communicating, both in action and reflection, the purest qualities even of Earthly happiness; yet will it, in the

Life to Come, contribute to obtain That Surpassing Benediction of our Great LORD and MASTER, Which will be the Presage and Passport, in the Judgment That Awaits us, to the experience of His Love in all Eternity; sharing, through His Atoning Sacrifice and Imparted Righteousness, with the Meek and Lowly of heart, the Inconceivable and Interminable Joys of Heaven, having the Fulness of the Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT Poured out upon us, and so Fitted to be Heirs of our SAVIOUR'S KINGDOM in Glory.

CHRIST, Who Knew all Things, being Before all Things, and Himself in The GODHEAD, CREATOR of All, Knew that His Hour was Coming, when the power of Darkness would prevail over Him, and His SPIRIT be Made to Bear, in Expiatory Sacrifice, the Punishment due from DIVINE Justice to a World lying in wickedness. All the Sustaining Effort of DIVINE Grace He Foreknew He should then Need to Bow Submissively to Such a Load: He, therefore, Graciously Received, in the Devotee's reverential love and offering to Him, the Symbol of That Healing Unction, Which would Save His Body from corruption in the grave, and Fortify Him against the sting of Death. Of His Crucifixion He had Forewarned His Disciples; and to His Burial, as well as Resurrection, He had Taught them to look forward. The homage paid by the penitent Magdalene to Him, through Whom she believed Remission of her sins could alone Come to her, was obviously an example most profitable for instruction to the Weak in faith, and for reproof to the Wicked of heart, and, therefore, deserving the being Recorded in That Book, Which was most especially Written for the broken and contrite and believing Spirit. All the Evangelists notice the pouring out precious ointment, thereby fulfilling the Prediction of our SAVIOUR, and thereby extending the conviction and value of a lively repentance and faith in Him, wherever the Tidings of the Gracious Gospel are Spread.


*"Thy sins are Forgiven thee: go in Peace!"* were the Words of HEAVENLY Love, when Contemplating the earnest zeal and honest belief of this sin-smitten and shame-stricken Daughter of Adam. And a Like Consolation to every poor and abject and conscious and sorrowing Sinner, sincere in repentance and fervent in devotional gratitude, will be Dispensed from The Same FOUNT of DIVINE Mercy. Sinners, therefore, as we all are, and needing, like the Magdalene, Pardon to Save us from their Just Punishment, it behoves us to be, like her, sensibly alive to our danger, and to come, like her, in humility and Self-condemnation to JESUS, as The Propitiation for our sins, and The Reconciliation of our Souls: to come to Him with true sorrow of heart for having, by our offences, added to His Sufferings, and with humble hope of sharing, through His Offered Mediation, a Return of DIVINE Favour, to offer unto Him, in spirit and in truth, our reverential thankfulness and holy love, that He may, through The HOLY SPIRIT, Speak Pardon and Peace to our Souls, and Cleanse us from the stain of our iniquities by the Washing of His Blood; Advancing us to Holiness and The Eternal Favour of The GODHEAD by the Regenerating Influence of The Same Gracious SPIRIT, and Strengthening and Fitting us for sinless obedience to The DIVINE Will, and Holy Communion with the Heavenly Host in the Eternity to Come.

In proportion to our earnest and persevering endeavours to arrive at a true knowledge of ourselves, shall we discover and admit that, except we repent in the true spirit of repentance, we cannot reasonably hope to experience the Salvation Offered, through CHRIST, to the Penitent and Believing; and must, therefore, be left to the Influence of DIVINE Justice on our sins, and, consequently, perish in them. And, reflecting that every thought of the heart, every direction of the hand, every utterance of the tongue, should, from our youth up until now, have been in perfect conformity to the Will of GOD, as

Revealed by His Word, or Prompted through our consciences to our Souls by His SPIRIT, we should most superficially and unprofitably examine ourselves, if we find not, on a review of all our past Life, deep and lamentable occasion for the most abject Self-condemnation and repentance for sins committed and duties left undone, and be instantly led, in all fervency, to prayer unto The SAVIOUR of Sinners for Redemption. In the course of such genuine examination we shall feel little disposed to trouble ourselves with comparisons between our Lives and those of Others; knowing, that without CHRIST'S Sacrificial Intercession for us, we should be utterly dead to every hope of DIVINE Communion, and the Blessedness that is Inseparable from It. And, as that hope is Nourished in us through the Gift of The SPIRIT, as the First Fruits of our SAVIOUR'S Love, we should, in return, henceforth demonstrate, in every way in our power, the Influence of That Inestimable Sacrifice, by a holy love and willing obedience towards Him and His Commandments. Since He, as Both our CREATOR and REDEEMER, having Given us both the Life that is, and The Promise of That Which is to Come, and being, therefore, in the Highest Sense A CREDITOR for All we have and All we hope for, has a Just Claim, and Such as None can conscientiously gainsay, to the dedication of ourselves and every faculty and privilege we have, either in Soul or Body, to His Glory, and the Advancement of His Gracious Will, by shewing mercy and exercising charity, in its most copious sense, towards our Fellow Beings.

The Publican had invited our SAVIOUR to dine with him, but had paid Him no other particular attention; and had been led to do so, more probably, from curiosity than from any zeal in His Cause, or faith in His Mission: he entertained Him as a common Visitor, and not as The LORD of Life and All Things, and The MESSENGER of Everlasting Peace; he even reflected on Him in secret as not Acting up to His Professions, and condemned Him for Associating with a notorious Sinner, and for Arrogating to Himself a Power essentially and exclusively Belonging unto GOD. Thus is it, not in the courtesies of the World, that Christian hospitality consists, but in that cordial demonstration of unfeigned and Brotherly love, which seeks to communicate the plenteousness of Grace through the Tidings of Redemption; which invites to a feast truly Spiritual, and makes repentance and contrition, as the hunger of the Soul, the passport to it; which contributeth to ease the Traveller to the Land of rest, from the burthen of his sins, and bringeth him where he shall find Plenteous Absolution; which whispers, as the Harbinger of The PRINCE of Peace, That Peace to the Soul, which passeth all other understanding. May that hospitality be ours! and then that Peace may be ours also; for though it is more blessed to give than to receive of Man, yet All are Debtors to CHRIST; and as, when we have done all in our power to recompense, we must still be beholden immeasurably to His Mercy, in that spirit of dependance on Him should we ever seek, through Him, for The DIVINE Acquittance. And though, in an equal dedication of our means to the Glory of GOD, we may not have the record of what we have done handed down to Posterity, yet, in the World to Come, before the assembled Souls of All by whom this present World was inhabited, shall be Read from the Book of Life what we may have done purely through love to CHRIST; and, having rested our faith as well as hopes, not in our own but in His Merits, we may have our Souls Gladdened by The SAVIOUR'S Voice, Saying, "*Well done, good and faithful Servants! Enter into the Joy of your LORD! for inasmuch as ye did it to the Least of These, My Brethren, ye did it unto Me.*" But, if needing repentance, as assuredly we all do, we heed not the fulfilment of that indispensable duty towards a Pure and Holy and Gracious GOD, and, like Simon, pride ourselves on our own comparative righteousness, not having the

ght faith, nor a just sense of our frequent disregard or rejection of The DIVINE Law, and the consequent need of Pardon and Reconciliation upon the conditions Offered us by The DIVINE INTERCESSOR, then must we look with trembling to The Day of Judgment; for since we shall have despised and at nought the Only Means of Grace unto Salvation, we have nothing but the thingness of our own unprofitable services to cast into the Scale against the requirements of DIVINE Justice. And who is sufficient for These Things?

Then One of the Twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the Chief Priests, and said unto them, "What will ye give me? and I will deliver Him unto you." And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. And from that time he sought opportunity to betray Him.—14 to 16. 

To be Called is not necessarily to be Elected in The DIVINE Councils: *Many are Called, but Few Chosen!* and the Apostle exhorts us to make not only *our Calling, but our Election, Sure!* The work of a lively faith in CHRIST, faith unto Salvation, is a work continuing unto the end of Life; for we cannot, singleness and sincerity of heart, love Him, unless we seek earnestly and at all times to do His Will and promote His Honour. Judas was Called by The LORD of Life to be His Disciple: he was Selected to be One amongst the apostolic Twelve, and was Appointed to the honourable Office of being the Steward and Provider for his Heavenly MASTER and His Companions: he was the Attendant on His Private Hours, partaking of the Privilege of hearing the conversation of Him, Who *Spake as never Man spake*; and in all Whose Words, whether publicly or privately Delivered, there were the profundity of Wisdom, grace, and Truth: he was also Witness of the Miracles and Works of Mercy and of Tender Loving-kindness Wrought by JESUS. Yet Judas fell, like Satan, from the pinnacle of Glory; covetousness being his actuating sin, and, consequently, his stumbling block, as it has been that of too Many who have been called to the Faith by the Tidings of The Gospel, but have preferred the shammon of unrighteousness, the vain and perishable riches of this World to the Everlasting Treasures of a Heavenly Inheritance. What a Lesson does this afford us of the necessity of unceasing vigilance over our own minds, lest, midst all our outward devotion and professions of Religion, we become seduced by some similar depravity of heart, which the Adversary of our Souls is ever ready to promote and take advantage of; whereby, and by yielding thereto, we, in like manner, betray the Great Cause we have professed to support; and for the miserable acquisition of this World's wealth, whether much or little in Other's eyes, we lose our part in the Ministry, as Members of the Church of CHRIST. The Record of this, according to St. Mark, is thus: *And Judas Iscariot, One of the Twelve, went unto the Chief Priests, to betray JESUS unto them: and when they heard it, they were glad; and promised to give him money. And he sought how he might conveniently betray Him.*—Chap. xiv, 10, 11.

Such is the joy, that the World yields to its deluded Victims, who, in the fever of their imagination and infatuation, exult in that, which is transient as the moment, and leaves a dreary waste to the future prospect; and to reflection the restless chidings of Self-condemnation and remorse, for having yielded to its attraction, and lost, in consequence, the only Happiness worth an immortal Soul's seeking. These Chief Priests and Pharisees, who, like us, had equally the need and the Offer of Salvation, stumbled amidst their perverse and wilful misconstruction of the Revealed Purposes of The MOST HIGH: stumbled at The ROCK of Zion; and It will ultimately *Fall upon them, and Grind them to powder*. And it will be well for us, if, professing to serve GOD and His CHRIST, we bring not, by apostacy and treachery, our hearts from the Altar of

GOD to the carnal sacrifices of Worldly-mindedness; and for the deceiving and fleeting gratifications of the lusts of the flesh, the sight of the eye, or the pride of Life, betray the Souls of Others, as well as commit our own, and pursue the course which must open out into Misery without measure and without end, as Shutting us out from the Pale of the now Freely and Graciously Offered Salvation, even the Everlasting Love of Him, Who would have been our REDEEMER. Every joy of the heart, or expression of joy in the countenance, which ariseth from principles hostile to Christianity amongst professing Christians, is an act like that of the Chief Priests, confirming, in a degree, the success of the Enemy of all Righteousness in his aim to confine and repel the Glorious and Revivifying Light of The Gospel. Let us, therefore, guard well our hearts against such approaches, and every other of our most subtle and malignant Enemy! and take heed that, in condemning the Self-destroying Jews, we wilfully fall not into the like Condemnation.

△ St. Luke thus states it: *Then entered Satan into Judas, surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the Twelve: and he went his way, and communed with the Chief Priests and Captains, how he might betray JESUS unto them. And they were glad; and covenanted to give him money. And he promised and sought opportunity to betray Him unto them in the absence of the Multitude.*—Chap. xxii, 3 to 6.

According as our hearts are predisposed, will The HOLY SPIRIT of GOD, or the Spirit of all evil and the Adversary of all Souls, the Devil, have rule over us: and when the Quickening Influence of the Former is quenched by our rejection of It, the Latter instantly and unavoidably (for there is no middle or neutral State, as The SON of GOD Declared, Saying, "*He, that is not for Us, is against Us,*") takes full possession of our Souls, and hurrying us from iniquity unto iniquity, brings on us swift destruction. But against such threatening or impending ruin, we have (Praise be to GOD!) A SAVIOUR, Which is CHRIST, The LORD: and if we call on Him in faith, in such or in any time of Spiritual need, to be our DEFENDER, we shall not call in vain; and Satan will then flee from us; for CHRIST, by the Influence of His SPIRIT, will Lift up our heads above all our Enemies, and Give us Victory in this conflict as a reward for the constancy of our devotedness to Him, and our implicit reliance on His Word and Power. In looking at the conduct of Judas, as having been made the Instrument of Satan, Some may, in their infatuated blindness and desire to palliate their own offendings against both moral and DIVINE Law, attribute to an influence which he could not resist; and for which, therefore, he is not criminally answerable. But Judas himself thought not so; and, on the contrary, the pangs of remorse, which instantly seized him, were too violent for his nature to endure; for he rushed on Self-destruction, vainly hoping, if he hoped at all, that then would terminate his insupportable misery: vain, indeed; for as our SAVIOUR Himself Said, "*Better would it have been, if the Man, by whom The SON of Man was betrayed, had never been born!*" Others may think, that guilty as they themselves may have been, yet, if Assisted as Judas was, with the Immediate Presence and Counsel of The SON of The MOST HIGH, they never could have fallen into such a snare of the Tempter, as to have deserted, much less betrayed, their Heavenly MASTER. But is not This Same JESUS in Spirit Present with every One of us? Have we not His Discourses continually Presented to our eyes or Sounded in our ears? May we not register both His Precepts and His Promises, His Warnings and Encouragements, both in our memories and in our hearts? Are not the Workings of His Mighty Power in the Miracles He Achieved, Testified to our conviction, though not Exhibited before us? And have we not, even beyond what Judas Iscariot possessed, the

Consummation of the Evidence of CHRIST'S DIVINITY, in His Resurrection from the Dead and Ascension into Heaven; and the consequent Coming of The HOLY GHOST, as The COMFORTER, to Pour out the Benign Influence of His Grace upon our hearts, if we will but, in faithfulness and thankfulness, receive It? And yet do we not, in our eager pursuit of the things of this World, whether those of wealth, power, or ambition, or such sensual or intellectual gratification as are at enmity with the Divine Life That should be in us, betray The LORD That Bought us; and, like the gluttonous Esau, sell our birthright for a mess of porridge, a birthright, as Heirs of Immortality and Joint-Heirs with CHRIST, of Eternal Glory; in comparison with which the birthright of Esau is only as a shadow of an image, being less than the littleness of Time, when contrasted with Eternity. St. John, in his Record of the Gospel, in like manner with St. Luke, attributes to the successful influence of Satan over the corrupt and yielding heart of Judas, the betrayal of The SON of GOD; still acting, doubtlessly, on the lingering hope that, though He had Resisted his early temptations, He might, in the agonies of an ignominious crucifixion, Shrink from their protraction, and Leave the Fallen Nature of Man to itself, and so enlarge the borders and multiply, with Numbers without number, the Inmates of Hell. *And Supper being ended, the Devil put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's Son, to betray JESUS.*—John xiii, 2. And though this Evangelist gives not the concluding history of the Traitor, yet wherever he speaks of Judas Iscariot, that character is associated with his name. The act of this horrid treachery, and the miserable inducement to it, had long before been foretold in terms most singularly minute and unambiguous; and, though so plainly written, that (to use the figurative language of Scripture,) he that ran might have read, and though CHRIST, doubtless, was frequently Expounding to His Disciples the Scriptures, and more particularly Such Parts as had Reference to Himself, yet covetousness, the Soul's worst idolatry, blinded Judas, and made him insensible to the consequences which could not but await the Perpetrator of so treacherous and nefarious an act. *The Word of The LORD Said, "If ye think good, give Me My Price! and, if not, forbear!" So they weighed for My Price thirty pieces of silver. And The LORD Said unto His Prophet, "Cast it unto the Potter: a goodly Price, that I was Prized at of them." And he took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the Potter in the House of The LORD.*—Zech. xi, 12, 13. [See Chapter xxvii, 3 to 10.]

The conduct of Judas was not, it seems, the unpremeditated act of Human weakness, but the deliberated aim of wickedness and subtle contrivance: *he sought opportunity to betray his* more than Human FRIEND and ADVISER. Sudden temptation may overcome us; and in the thoughts, desperately wicked as sometimes those thoughts are, but little opportunity may occasionally be afforded for deliberation between the incitement and the moment of action: but where a season for consideration and reflection is afforded, and that season is only devoted to ripen our plans of Hellish tendency, then it is that we most fearfully betray our Soul's best interest, and confirm our steps in the ways of interminable destruction: Then it is that, being in spirit associated with the part and the principles of the Traitor Judas, we become awfully leagued with him, and lay ourselves open to the endless confusion and remorse and bitterness of anguish which he experienced. Had Judas been foiled in his attempt on the Life of his DIVINE MASTER, still, according to the principle both of Human and DIVINE Law bearing on the point, he would have been amenable to condign punishment: and so, if in the evil surmisings and devisings of our hearts, we are yet frustrated by an Over-ruling PROVIDENCE in the perpetration of our projects, and, though seeking opportunity we do not find one, yet will even

our own hearts condemn us, when, in the full Light of Truth, we are Called unto Judgment at the Last Day. Therefore let us endeavour to cherish in our Souls an habitual and holy communing with GOD! and should evil imaginations present themselves to us, as they often uninvitedly do from the evil and malicious workings of Satan, and are, perhaps, Permitted, as in the case of Job, to try our faith and prove our works, let us instantly fly to prayer, and seek the Aid of The SPIRIT of Grace to dismiss them, and strive to have them supplanted by holy meditations on the Presence and Purity of GOD, of the Sacrifice Made by The SON of His Love to Extirpate sin from our hearts, and of the certain and dreadful Effects of The DIVINE Displeasure at a continuance in evil. Let us be so far from seeking opportunity to betray CHRIST or His Cause, that we avail ourselves of all means and occasions of gloryfying Him, that He may Glorify us, when He Cometh with Great Power in the Clouds of Heaven, and Layeth open the secrets of all hearts, and Uncovereth the Record of all the hidden deeds of darkness. Thus, instead of the thirty pieces of silver, which yielded neither advantage nor satisfaction to Judas, even when possessed of them, and for which he, nevertheless, sacrificed his Immortal Soul to Eternal pains, and his Body to fearful destruction, we shall have, not the wages of sin which is Death, but Riches in Heaven, bringing with them Joys unspeakable and full of Glory, even the Manifestation of the Mercies and Gracious Love and Favour of JEHOVAH, through the Interposed Merits of our REDEEMER. Himself both our ADVOCATE and JUDGE.

△ Now the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Disciples came to JESUS, saying unto Him, "Where wilt Thou that we prepare for Thee to Eat the Passover?" And He Said, "Go into the City to such a Man, and say unto him, "The MASTER Saith, 'My Time is at hand, I will Keep the Passover at thy house with My Disciples.'" And the Disciples did as JESUS had Appointed them; and they made ready the Passover.—17 to 19.

By the Mosaic Ritual, as DIVINELY Appointed, it was thus Directed that the Israelites should keep this Feast: "*Ye shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread: for in This self-same Day 1, The LORD, brought your Armies out of the Land of Egypt; therefore shall ye observe This Day in your Generations by an ordinance for ever: in the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, at Even, ye shall eat Unleavened Bread until the one and twentieth day of the month at Even: seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses: for Whosoever eateth that, which is leavened, even that Soul shall be cut off from the Congregation of Israel; whether he be a Stranger, or born in the Land. And in the first day there shall be a holy Convocation: and in the seventh day there shall be a holy Convocation to you: no manner of work shall be done in them, save that, which every Man must eat; that only may be done of you.*"—Exod. xii, 17 to 19. 16.

Were Human Nature such as it should be, in all things obedient to the Law Written by the Finger of GOD on the heart, it would have been unnecessary to have coupled any peculiar institution of Ceremonial Law, (more particularly such as were commemorative of DIVINE Blessings,) with the penalty of Punishment on their infringement. But, alas! so fallen is Man, by this very sin of disobedience to what his heart prompted as his duty, that he must be driven and goaded to its observance and performance, by the Threat of pains and of penalties; though, in the Same Breath, as it were, first Invited by the Promise of Everlasting Rewards of the most Transcendant Quality, if he but fulfil it.

The Feast of the Passover had reference to a temporal Deliverance: but that Deliverance was a Type or Figure of A Spiritual Deliverance, Which was

Universal in Its Objects, and would be Infinite in Its Effects. When That, which is typified, is Come, then that, which was the figure, is done away: and the observance of the Jewish Passover does not belong to Christians; but a duty does belong to them, and is Enjoined at the peril, not of temporal but of Eternal Death, to commemorate as a Spiritual Festival, with hearts truly unleavened of all guile and worldly-mindedness, the Great Deliverance from the captivity and bondage of Sin and Satan, Wrought for the Penitent and Believing, by the Sacrifice of The Holy SON of GOD, Who, in Bearing our iniquities, that by That Free-Will Offering of Himself He might Expiate them, Endured Pains infinitely greater than the accumulated plagues of Egypt, or the sufferings of the Israelites. May we so honour and adore Him, in The UNITY of The GOD-HEAD, that He may not have Suffered for us in vain, lest we become unable, through our indifference and neglect towards Him, and towards the Means of Grace and of Salvation Set before us, to receive Deliverance in That fearful Time of Need, when an Everlasting Vengeance will be Visited by His Ministering Angels, in desolation and despair, on every heart, into which the Influence of Such Atonement and Reconciliation has not been gratefully received.

The Prayer, which our SAVIOUR Taught, "*Give us this day our daily bread!*" Flowed from the Principle, That Actuated Him throughout His Sojourn upon Earth. He Inculcated the avoidance of an over-anxious care for the things of this Life, and Seemed not to Provide beyond what the immediate occasion called for: for it was not till the first day of the Feast, that He even Intimated to His Disciples, where it should be Observed; though, of course, as All Power and All Knowledge were Essentially Parts of His DIVINE Nature, He Foreknew that All Things would be Ready, both in time and place, for His Purpose. The ready attention of the Disciples of CHRIST, in this question to Him, as to their preparation for keeping the Feast, marks their affectionate regard for and willing subserviency to His Wishes: It shews, likewise, the deference paid to Him (though Lowly and Humble and, comparatively, Mean in Earthly Parentage He was,) by Those, who were most in His Confidence, and present to all His Habits and Demeanour in private as in public. Indeed, what Consummate Wisdom must His Familiar Conversation have Unfolded! What delightfulness must the Uniform Tenderness and Benevolence of His Manner have Imparted! But assuredly such Winning Attractions died not with Him, nor with Those, who lived with Him; but They are Laid up in Store for Those, who will be with Him in His Exaltation; and the Merits of Which Charms will then be more justly appreciated and felt by All His Saints, when their mortal vision shall put on Immortality, and when, in the fulness of Spiritual Advancement, they will behold Him as The Only Begotten of The FATHER, Full of Grace and Truth.

As Very GOD, the Attribute of Omniscience necessarily Belonged to JESUS; and two Instances are here given of His Exercise of It; by His Foreknowledge of the Individual and his character, to whose house the Disciples were directed, and where the celebration of the Feast, by them, was *permissively* to take place; and the Approaching Sacrifice of Himself, as The LAMB of GOD, to Save His People from an Eternal Banishment from the Glory of His Presence, by Himself Bearing the Punishment of their repented sins. The Same All-penetrating Eye Reacheth to the bottom of every heart amongst us; and Knoweth whether we should be willing to receive, in faith, The Same DIVINE VISITANT, were other Messengers of His Sent to us for that Purpose. Let us not, however, presume too much upon our readiness to evince, even under very similar circumstances, an equal devotedness to The LORD of Life; but, in all humility of heart, may we pray that we may be Made ever ready to



receive and cherish CHRIST within our hearts, and to take part in that Spiritual Feast, Which more peculiarly marks and celebrates the Sacrifice for us of The LORD of Life. What CHRIST Said in Truth, "*My Time is at hand!*" every One of us should bring ourselves in Spirit to say daily also; for who can say what a day may bring forth? and if to-day we pass over without any act or utterance of commemorative gratitude for the Gracious Incarnation and Intercession of The SON of GOD for us, as Members of a fallen Race, to-morrow we may be Called to our Great Account, and find the Record of our unmindfulness of DIVINE Mercies and Blessings Produced even to our Self-condemnation; and may be Driven out from all hope of Salvation, with All, who rejected CHRIST in the Day of their probation.

THE HOLY JESUS Appoints, and The HOLY SPIRIT Prompts, every heart of us to be the place where the Feast of Christian Faith should be held; let us, therefore, adopt The Admonition of The ONE, and the Injunction of The OTHER, and prepare our hearts by fervent prayer, knowing that the Preparation of the heart is from GOD, that our hearts may instantly and lastingly be Turned from disobedience to the wisdom of the Just, and be Made ready, in dutiful and grateful devotedness, for the Reception and Appropriation of the Truths and the Precepts of The Gospel.

The narrative of This Incident, according to St. Mark, is as follows: *The first day of Unleavened Bread, when they killed the Passover, His (JESUS) Disciples said unto Him, "Where wilt Thou that we go and prepare, that Thou mayest Eat the Passover?" And He Sendeth forth Two of His Disciples, and Saith unto them, "Go ye into the City, and there shall meet you a Man bearing a pitcher of Water, follow him! and whosoever he shall go in, say ye to the good Man of the house, 'THE MASTER Saith, 'Where is the Guest Chamber, where I shall Eat the Passover with My Disciples?' And he will shew you a large upper room furnished and prepared: there make ready for Us!" And His Disciples went forth, and came into the City, and found, as He had Said unto them: and they made ready the Passover.*—Chap. xiv, 12 to 16.

This account is only more circumstantial than that of the Text, and more decidedly marks the Omniscience of The SON of Man, by referring the Disciples, not in the first instance to the particular house, but to a Servant belonging to it for their guidance, and that at a particular time, when he should be absent from it, and engaged in a particular service: He then Goes on to Describe the situation and condition of the room, which He Foreknew (though, doubtless, without any previous Personal Communication with its Owner,) would be allotted for the purpose wanted.

The description given of the Transaction by St. Luke is thus: *Then came the day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover must be killed; and He (JESUS) Sent Peter and John, Saying, "Go and prepare us the Passover, that We may Eat!" And they Said unto Him, "Where wilt Thou that we prepare?" And He Said unto them, "Behold, when ye are entered into the City, there shall a Man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house, where he entereth in! and ye shall say unto the good Man of the house, 'The MASTER Saith unto thee, Where is the Guest Chamber, where I shall Eat the Passover with My Disciples?' And he shall shew you a large upper room furnished! there make ready!" And they went, and found as He had Said unto them; and they made ready the Passover.*—Chap. xxii, 7 to 13.

This account is as minute as that of St. Mark, and in one respect, but is one only, does it exceed it, in mentioning the names of the two Disciples Appointed by our SAVIOUR for the Errand; and Those the Two, who seemed to be generally the most prominent to do His Will: of One of whom it is Recorded

by way of pre-eminence, that *JESUS Loved him*, implying Love, in rather a higher degree than was shared by the other Disciples; and of the Other, that *though Satan had desired to sift him as wheat, yet CHRIST had Compassionately Prayed The FATHER for him*: and finally *Gave unto him the Keys of His Church: Which He Declared He had Built upon A ROCK; and that the Gates of Hell should not prevail against It.*

Now when the Even was come, He Sat down with the Twelve; and, as they did eat, He Said, "Verily, I Say unto you, that One of you shall betray Me!" And they were exceeding sorrowful; and began every One of them to say unto Him, "LORD, is it I?" And He Answered, and Said, "He, that dippeth his hand with Me in the dish, the Same shall betray Me. THE SON of Man Goeth, as it is Written of Him: but Woe unto that Man, by whom The SON of Man is betrayed! It had been good for that Man, if he had not been born!" Then Judas, which betrayed Him, answered, and said, "MASTER, is it I?" HE Said unto him, "Thou hast Said."—20 to 25.

What a Subject for contemplation does This Picture of our SAVIOUR, and His Chosen Companions present, assembled, as they were, at the most solemn of the Legal Sacrifices, by which the Mysterious Sacrifice of That Same Holy PERSON was so Peculiarly Foreshadowed, Himself Knowing the approaching Hour and the Powers of Darkness, that would, for a season, eclipse the Glory of His DIVINITY, and Fill His SPIRIT with Anguish, and His Body with Agony; HIS Disciples, hanging on His Lips, to watch their every Utterance, as the Fount of Wisdom, Goodness, and Truth, and feasting on the Spiritual Repast thus Set before them. Amidst the solemn Scene thus Opening upon them, and with devout gratitude rising as incense from the hearts of the faithful Apostles, our SAVIOUR Suddenly Impresses them with surprise and lamentation, by a Declaration as unwelcomed as unsuspected, that One amongst them, even One of themselves, of the Chosen Few, who had hitherto followed Him so perseveringly, and with such seeming affection and devotion, having left Kindred, Connection, and Substance for the purpose, should betray Him! Still, so great was their confidence in His Veracity and Foreknowledge, that None appeared to doubt of His Prediction being Realized; though not One of the Eleven, at least, felt conscious of any such design working in his heart; nor, as it should also seem, did Any of them suspect Judas. But as he was then bent upon the plot, he must have been so arch a Traitor, so much the Child of Hell, that, notwithstanding the pointed accusation, he yet betrayed, neither by countenance or manner (it may be presumed), any sense of guilty intentions against his DIVINE MASTER, but equally, with every One of the Others, said, *LORD, is it I?* And though our SAVIOUR, according to the understood Hebrew idiom, Answered him affirmatively, thereby Giving him Another proof of His DIVINITY; and though Prefacing it with a Malediction so awful and alarming, as it appeared calculated to be, yet so hardened was the heart of Judas by his prevailing and besetting sin of covetousness, that on him it made no lasting or influential impression, and did not divert him from his fell and wicked purpose. There cannot well be a stronger instance of the reconcileableness of the Foreknowledge of GOD, and the free agency of Man. "*The SON of Man Goeth as it is Written of Him, (in the Psalms and in the Prophets,) but Woe unto that Man, by whom The SON of Man is betrayed! It had been good for that Man if he had not been born.*" Wonderful and past our finite comprehension as is this Doctrine of the Universal Knowledge of GOD, Extending equally to the Future as to the Past and Present, the admission of It, as a principle of faith, is indispensable towards furnishing us with a just conception of A Great FIRST CAUSE of All, with a Supremacy over All. We, therefore,

must admit the Justice of the Anticipated Judgment upon Judas, whose hellish disposition was made subservient to the Great Purpose of HEAVEN, but without any Controul or Restraint, which would take from him the full measure of responsibility for his conduct.

The description, as given by St. Mark, of the Occurrences Recorded in the Text, is as follows: *And in the evening JESUS Cometh with the Twelve; and as They Sat and did Eat, JESUS Said, "Verily, I Say unto you, One of you, which eateth with Me, shall betray Me!" And they began to be sorrowful, and to say unto Him, One by One, "Is it I?" and Another said, "Is it I?" And He Answered and Said unto them, "It is One of the Twelve, that dippeth with Me in the dish: The SON of Man indeed Goeth, as it is Written of Him; but Woe to that Man, by whom The SON of Man is betrayed! good were it for that Man, if he had never been born!"*—Chap. xiv, 17 to 21.

This narrative, as far as it extends, most fully accords with that in the Text; but the particular conversation, which passed between our SAVIOUR and the Traitor Judas, is not here: Though it is probable the marked inquiry of One of the Apostles, though not named by this Evangelist, had reference to Judas. And it is worthy of observation, in confirmation of the Great Doctrine of Prescience in GOD and responsibility in Man as a free Agent, that not One of the Disciples regarded the Fulfilment of Prophecy as an exoneration of the Individual Instrument, towards Its Fulfilment, from the effects of Condemnatory Judgment upon the act. Indeed, so far from this being the case, each Disciple amongst the faithful Eleven began to be exceedingly distressed, and to inquire with an earnestness that bespoke their sense of the heinous offence about to be committed, "*LORD, is it I?*"

St. Luke's account is thus: *And when the hour was come, JESUS Sat down, and the Twelve Apostles with Him; and He Said unto them, "Behold, the hand of him, that betrayeth Me, is with Me on the table: and truly The SON of Man Goeth as It was Determined: but Woe unto that Man, by whom He is betrayed!" And they began to inquire among themselves, "Which of Them it was that should do this thing?"*—Chap. xxii, 14. 21 to 23.

This Statement, though less circumstantial, is still, to the extent to which it reaches, confirmatory of the Others, embracing the most material Subject, the Prophecy of the Eventual Sacrifice of CHRIST, and of the treachery that should directly lead to it, and its Condemnation. For to give accomplishment to the previous Prophecies in Scripture, by which the Means of Man's Salvation were Foretold, such treachery and false accusation were necessary; since CHRIST, being without sin, could not otherwise have been Made Amenable to the severest penalty of the Roman law, death.

△ In the Gospel by St. John, after mention is made of the Feast, and (as Supper being ended,) of our SAVIOUR'S Washing His Disciple's feet, to Incalcate, by Example, the virtues of humility and Brotherly love, JESUS Said to them, "*Ye are clean: but not All!*" For (as the Evangelist adds,) *He Knew who should betray Him; therefore Said He, "Ye are not All clean!" And further Said JESUS, "I Speak not of you All: I Know whom I have Chosen! but that the Scripture (Ps. xli, 9,) may be Fulfilled, He, that eateth bread with Me, hath lifted up his heel against Me. Now I Tell you before it come, that when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am He: Verily, Verily, I Say unto you. He that receiveth whomsoever I Send, receiveth Me; and he, that receiveth Me, receiveth Him That Sent Me."* When JESUS had thus Said, *He was Troubled in Spirit, and Testified and Said, "Verily, Verily, I Say unto you, That One of you shall betray Me."* Then the Disciples looked One on Another, doubting of whom He Spake: now there was leaning on JESUS' Bosom One of His Disciples.

whom JESUS Loved: Simon Peter, therefore, beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom He Spake: he then, lying on JESUS' Breast, saith unto Him, "LORD, who is it?" JESUS Answered, "He, it is, to whom I shall Give a sop, when I have Dipped it." And when He had Dipped the sop, He Gave it to Judas Iscariot, the Son of Simon. And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then Said JESUS unto him, "That thou doest, do quickly!" Now no Man at the table knew for What Intent He Spake This unto him; for Some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that JESUS had Said unto him, "Buy those things that We have need of against the Feast!" or that he should give something to the Poor. He, then, having received the sop, went immediately out, and it was night.—John xiii, 10, 11. 18 to 30.

This narrative proceeds from the very Disciple, who had questioned our SAVIOUR, and who seemed to possess, in a peculiar degree, His Confidence and Regard; for towards the conclusion of his Record of The Gospel, on our SAVIOUR'S Appearing after His Resurrection, and Exhorting Peter to feed His Flock, it is Written: *Then Peter, turning about, seeth the Disciple, whom JESUS Loved, following, which also leaned on His Breast at Supper, and Said, "LORD, which is he, that betrayeth Thee?"* And it is added, *This is the Disciple which testifieth of These Things, and wrote These Things; and we know that his testimony is true.*—John xxi, 20. 24. Our SAVIOUR is thus represented under the Influence, Which so pre-eminently Distinguished Him, and Which He so Earnestly Endeavoured to Infuse into His Disciples' hearts, the love or tender consideration of Enemies; for *He was Grieved in the SPIRIT*, Mourning most of All that a Creature, who had so long been His Companion, and who had been Taught by Him the Way to and the Value of Eternal Happiness, should, amidst so much Inducement to keep from the path of the Destroyer, wilfully and perversely yield to the seductions of Satan, and sell himself to work the most flagrant of all evils, and, making Worldly riches his god, sacrifice his Immortal Soul as its victim, and forego, everlastingly, the Treasures of Heaven. HE was sore Troubled that One, who had so been the Companion of His Labours of Love for the Salvation of the whole Human Race, with whom He had Taken sweet Counsel, and had Walked together to the Courts of The LORD'S House; who had had Laid Open to him the Deep Things of GOD by The SON of GOD Himself, should deliberately and with unbending aim, be the Instrument of Destruction to The AUTHOR of Light and Life, and so bring on himself that Awful Visitation of The DIVINE Displeasure, Which even The DIVINE Mercy would be Prevented from Overshadowing in the Day of Judgment. Thence arose, doubtless, much, at least, of the Agitation of Soul that Affected our SAVIOUR. And so should Each of us feel, when seeing a Fellow-Creature bent on Self-destruction by a willing surrender of the heart to be the Servant of Sin, and, more especially, when striving to bring ourselves or Others into the same awful Condemnation: and if it be, or seem to be, practicable, we should step between the evil and the Perpetrator thereof, lest the measure of iniquity be filled up, and the Sentence of Exile from the Clemency of GOD in CHRIST JESUS be Irrevocably Sealed against him.

St. John himself, though pillowed on our SAVIOUR'S Bosom, when on Earth, will not alone engross That Heavenly Station in the Life to Come; for All, who have Loved The LORD JESUS CHRIST on Earth, will participate with that Evangelist in that Exalted Rank.

Amongst the Worldlings and the luke-warm Christians, scarce two or three can be gathered together, but our SAVIOUR may Say, with too much Truth, "*One of you shall betray Me!*" For *wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to Destruction; and Many there be, which go in thereat!* But *strait is the*

*Gate, and narrow is the Way, which leadeth unto Life; and Few there be that find it.*—Matt. vii, 13, 14.

All, who, being Called to be CHRIST'S, depart from Him, do, in effect, betray Him: and good, perhaps, would it have been for them, (should they die in their impenitence and practical unbelief,) if they had not been born; for Woe, Everlasting Woe, Woe that shall know no mitigation from hope, no alleviation from Others' sympathy, no tolerance as a trial, though fiery, but that might one day end, will be their Irreversible Lot. Let, therefore, in spirit, This Saying of CHRIST be applied to ourselves, and again and again may we, individually, in humility and reverence, ask of Him, "LORD, is it I?" Am I betraying Thee, in perverting Thy Precepts by my practice, however conformable may be my professions of respect for Them? Am I faithful in word only, and not in deed also? Is my heart at variance with my mouth, and, therefore, not right with Thee? Do I prefer the things of the World to Those of Eternity? Though Both are clearly and admissively Set before me, and I, as well as All, am thus Called upon to make an election, "*Choose ye!*" having Imparted to us a perfect freedom of will, and the most Exalted Encouragement to cease from Man, and to be with CHRIST.

Difficult as it is for Human reason to reconcile to itself the compatibility of free Agency with the Prevailing Influence of A Supernatural POWER, whether of Good or Evil, Exercised over us, it is too expressly Declared throughout Scripture, to admit of a belief in the One without faith in the Other. If All that is meant by it, were the furtherance, by Extraneous Powers, of that which is intrinsically in Man as his will, or the disposition or affections of his heart, to which, if good, DIVINE Grace is Imparted by The HOLY SPIRIT, or, if evil, the Spirit of evil is admitted as aiding every evil propensity: this might seem reconcilable to Man's finite understanding. But this may not be the solution of the difficulty. We have, however, for our Rescue and Consolation, whatever be our temptation, the Assurance that GOD hath, with the temptation, Prepared for us a Way to escape, if we will but avail ourselves of it; and that though sin and the inducements to sin, whether from within or from without us, may and do abound, Grace doth much more Abound unto them, who, in lowliness and thankfulness of heart, will seek for It, or use It when, as It ever is, Mercifully Offered and even Pressed upon the Penitent and Believing. Whatever power Satan may be permitted to use over us, we may be assured, arises from the faithlessness of our own hearts, from that predisposition to evil, whether of covetousness or any other sin that was in Judas Iscariot, before Satan was Suffered, even in the Presence of The SON of GOD, to enter into him and gain ascendancy over him. And to the same Awful Denunciation of DIVINE Wrath shall we be, thereby, equally and justly exposed, by the workings of our minds in premeditated sin, equally as by sudden and undeliberated acts of iniquity, if not more so; since then we, like the apostate Disciple, virtually sell ourselves to the Devil, to that Spirit of evil, which goeth about, to and fro upon the Earth, seeking whom and how it may devour, and how it may disappoint the Gracious Purpose of Man's Redemption in CHRIST JESUS. Let us, therefore, direct our thoughts, in the instant they take a bias unfavourable to the Pure Precepts of the Gospel, unto The Omnipresent and Omniscient Nature of The DEITY, and to His Proofs of Mercy and of Love; and then Satan, baffled in his aim at our eternal destruction, will flee from us in despair of getting the dominion over us; but if we continue to dwell on unhallowed thoughts, and contemplate, at all hazards, the fulfilment of such wicked devices, we then lay ourselves open to the influence of the Enemy of Souls, who, finding us the Children, will soon seduce us to become the Champions of Unrighteousness and all Ungodliness, and make

us heirs of the wretchedness as well as wickedness of himself, who, as the Father of infidelity and apostacy, is reaping the bitter fruits thereof, in eternal banishment from the Glory of The DIVINE Presence and the Joy of the Exercise of Its Favouring Power.

*"That thou doest, do quickly!"* CHRIST, Who Knew all things, and Knew what was in Man, Knew that the Soul of Judas was unalterably bent on the commission of the contemplated crime. In consideration, therefore, of Himself, that His Final and Successful Conflict with Satan and the Power of Darkness might not uselessly be Retarded, He then Called upon His Betrayer to do that forthwith, which he had already resolved to accomplish. To a Soul less hardened in iniquity, and, therefore, not closed against the Light of Truth and the reception of Wisdom from Above, Such an Observation was calculated to convey forcibly, through the Conscience, the conviction of A Present GOD, from the Penetration of the deep things of the heart; for though the other Apostles were ignorant of the true tendency of the Words, doubtless, they must have been, in some measure, understood by Judas, or might have been, had he chosen to weigh their Purport. But so hard is it for a rich Man, or (which is virtually the same thing,) he that setteth his heart upon riches, to enter into The KINGDOM of GOD, that his eyes were wilfully blinded to the Indirect Caution and Admonition. And as it was with Judas, so is it with All, who, like him, sell themselves to work evil in the Sight of GOD. Conscience, which is the Voice of GOD Speaking within us, speaks to All, at times, to warn them against the perpetration of evil or a continuance in sin; and it is only when the heart is utterly abandoned to evil courses, and become desperately wicked, being entirely reprobate, and having altogether quenched the Light of The SPIRIT, that Such Words or any other as Chidings and Reproving of Conscience, are Uttered in vain: and even if, in the moment of retirement, any impression be made, the cares and pleasures of the World soon stifle its still small voice, though it be the Messenger of Him, Who Preached Repentance and the Remission of sin, that Redemption, through His Sacrifice, might Graciously Follow thereon. The same Words may be differently understood and applied by different Persons, and even by the same Individual at different times; when, however, our Conscience helps us to an interpretation different from the construction of Others, and The HOLY GHOST Shines inwardly in our hearts, that we may rightly read them, let us not resist the application, if made to ourselves, nor shut our eyes against That, Which may bring with It the Alternative of Life or Death, but suffer the seasonable Correction to end promptly in amendment. The one conclusion, however, to which the Apostles came, as to the meaning of the Words thus Used by our SAVIOUR to His Betrayer, serves to shew that both He and His Disciples were wont to pay for what they had need, thus rendering, in a worldly sense, unto All their due, though He Himself, as The CREATOR of All, was The Free Giver of All: and the other in like manner incidentally demonstrated, that not only, as the Effects of His Heavenly Mission, did the Lamé walk and the Blind see; not only were the Sick healed and the Lepers cleansed; and not only had the Poor The Gospel Preached unto them; but money was distributed amongst the Sufferers for the relief of their temporal necessities, and, doubtless, in order to Set an Example of the righteous and most truly profitable application of worldly wealth.

*He then, having received the sop, went immediately out, and it was night.* It was a work of darkness, and that season was therefore apt for it: indeed, one of the most successful instruments in the hand of Satan is the cover of the Night; and one of the most astonishing proofs of Man's folly, and of the deception to which his wickedness renders him the Dupe, is the hardihood displayed by him

in the perpetration of his diabolical purposes, because the eye of his Fellow-Man is veiled from beholding him; though a moment's reflection would assure him that The Eye of The LORD of the Whole Earth, and at the Bar of Whose Irreversible Judgment he must finally appear, is ever upon him, and that He will assuredly Sentence him to Condemnation and Punishment for the iniquity committed, and of which the most minute and faithful Record will be Produced: For *with GOD Darkness and Light are both alike*; and through His Omniscience nothing is covered, that shall not be fully Revealed. Though we may escape from Human punishment and from Human detection, yet is there ONE, Whose Penetration no subtlety can elude, Whose Grasp no Art can avoid, and Whose Wrath no Power can withstand. May we, therefore, pray to be enabled to walk as *Children of the Light*, knowing that The Eye of The ALMIGHTY is Ever upon us, and that He, by His SPIRIT, is Ever Ready to be our LIGHT in darkness, our SAFEGUARD in danger, and our HOPE in death; if, trusting in Him, we but seek Him, whilst haply He may be Found, and obey Him, not as Judas did The MESSIAH, with the wicked purpose of betraying Him, but in the Spirit of gratitude, of holy love, and of delight in His Service, and a desire to do Him honour.

△ *"THE SON of Man Goeth, as it is Written of Him."* By the Inspired Psalmist, in the range of his Prophetic vision, it was foretold of The SON of David that He should Suffer many things, as The JUST ONE, Who was, by Such Expiation on Mankind's behalf, to Become The JUSTIFIER of All that believe in Him. The Very Words He was to Use on the Cross, and the scoffs, and contumely and cruelty with which He was to be assailed, were particularly foretold: *"My GOD! My GOD! Why hast Thou Forsaken Me? I am a reproach of Men; and Despised of the People! All they, that see Me, laugh Me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, 'He Trusted in The LORD, that He would Deliver Him.' Again! The Assembly of the Wicked have inclosed Me: they pierced My Hands and My Feet! they part My Garments among them, and cast lots upon My Vesture."*—Ps. xxii.

The same Spirit of Prophecy proclaimed, through the mouth of Isaiah, the Sufferings of The LAMB of GOD for the sins of Mankind, thus: *HE is despised and rejected of Men, a Man of Sorrows, and Acquainted with grief; and we hid, as it were, our faces from Him. He was despised, and we esteemed Him not. Surely He hath Borne our griefs and Carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem Him Stricken, Smitten of GOD, and Afflicted! But He was Wounded for our transgressions, He was Bruised for our iniquities; the Chastisement of our Peace was upon Him; and with His Stripes we are Healed. All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every One to his own way; and The LORD hath Laid on Him the iniquity of us All!*—Isa. liii, 3 to 6.

Through Daniel the Prophet, was it also declared that MESSIAH should be Cut off; but not for Himself.—Chap. ix, 26. To which Prophecies our SAVIOUR Himself Alluded, as Applicable to Himself in the Conversation with His three Disciples present at His Transfiguration, Saying, *"How it is Written of The SON of Man, that He must Suffer many things and be set at nought."*—Mark ix, 11, 12.

After His Resurrection also, upon His Appearing to the two Disciples on their way to Emmaus, He Said unto them, *"O Fools and slow of heart to believe All, That the Prophets have spoken! Ought not CHRIST to have Suffered These Things; and to Enter into His Glory? And, Beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He Expounded unto them, in All the Scriptures, the Things concerning Himself."* And Again, on His Appearance to the Eleven, He Said unto them, *"These are the Words, Which I Spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that All Things*

*must be Fulfilled, Which were Written in the Law of Moses and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms concerning Me!" Then Opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, and Said unto them, Thus it is Written; and Thus it Behoved CHRIST to Suffer!—Luke xxiv, 13. 25 to 27. 36. 44 to 46.*

What the Prophets confidently foretold, the Apostles resolutely affirmed had come to pass; and sealed, where it was necessary, their testimony with their blood; for it is recorded, that in a Synagogue of the Jews at Thessalonica, Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging that CHRIST must needs have Suffered, and Risen again from the Dead.—Acts xvii, 1, 2. And on that Apostle being arraigned before King Agrippa by the Jews, who went about to kill him, he thus concludes his masterly defence, glorying in the Great Cause he was Appointed to support, and in the part he had been Permitted to take for his adored LORD and MASTER: *Having, therefore, obtained Help of GOD, I continue unto this day witnessing both to Small and Great, saying none other things than Those, Which the Prophets and Moses did say should Come, "That CHRIST should Suffer; and that He should be The FIRST that should Rise from the Dead, and should Shew Light unto the People and to the Gentiles."*—Acts xxvi, 21 to 23. In his first Epistle to his Corinthian Flock, the Apostle declares that the Gospel Which he preached, (and Which, in another of his Epistles, he certifies, is not after Man; for that he neither received It of Man, neither was he Taught It but by the Revelation of JESUS CHRIST, [Gal. i, 11, 12.] was, how that CHRIST Died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was Buried; and that He Rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures.—1 Cor. xv, 1 to 3. 4.

The Expiatory Sacrifice Made by CHRIST, was indispensably Necessary as a Means of bringing all penitent and true Believers unto Salvation from Condemnation, and to a Restoration, by Sanctification, unto the forfeited Image and Favour of GOD. "*THE SON of Man Goeth, as it is Written of Him:*" Goeth through Suffering and Persecution unto Death; Sufferings which every One of Us hath disgracefully heightened; for *The LORD Laid on Him the iniquity of us All!!!* Yet great as may have been our offences individually, if we harden not our hearts against the Inlets of DIVINE and Softening Grace, as did the Traitor Judas, The LORD, with A Heavenly FATHER'S Love, will Put away the Record of our offences, and Accept us for His Holy and Blessed SON'S Sake, and Raise us, through Him, from Condemnation to Glory.

The Visitation of Woe, thus Denounced against Judas for his treachery, is thus, in another place, forcibly characterized in a Communing of our MEDIATOR with His Heavenly FATHER: "*Those, that Thou Gavest Me, I have Kept, and None of Them is lost, but the Son of Perdition, that the Scripture might be Fulfilled:*" [John xvii, 12.] and again, when JESUS Asked His Disciples, "*Have not I Chosen you Twelve? and One of you is a Devil!*"—John vi, 70.

In any way to betray CHRIST or His Cause, is to yield to the Influence of the Devil, and, virtually therefore, when the conscience strikes the offending Soul with its ingratitude, the Soul, like One possessed, will know no peace night nor day; and, if it repent not in time, will experience, in Eternity, an impene-trable night of remorse and despair amongst the Sons of Perdition. Good, indeed, would it have been never to have been born, and infinitely better than to exchange an Inheritance of Light and Glory for one of darkness and desolation, and to be fixed for ever in the Abode of condemned Spirits, where woe is uncheked by suspense or the hope of any alleviation.

When Pilate ignorantly boasted that *he had the Power to crucify or to release JESUS, He Answered, "Thou couldest have no power at all against Me, except it were Given thee from Above:"* and, with reference to Judas Iscariot,



He Added : "*Therefore, he, that delivered Me unto thee, hath the greater sin.*"—John xix, 11. All Power is from Above ; and he, who procures the exercise of that Power for purposes of evil, by wicked or malicious devices, is awfully responsible, whether the Executioner of Such Authority be a Willing Instrument in such impious machinations, or not.

△ And as They were eating, JESUS Took Bread, and Blessed It, and Brake It, and Gave It to the Disciples, and Said, "Take, eat! This is My Body!" And He Took the Cup, and Gave Thanks, and Gave It to them, Saying, "Drink ye All of It! For This is My Blood of the New Testament, Which is Shed for Many, for the Remission of sins. But I Say unto you, I will not Drink henceforth of This Fruit of the Vine, until That Day, when I Drink It New with you in My FATHER'S KINGDOM."—26 to 29.

Hence arose the observance of that very important Ordinance of the Christian Church, the Sacrament of The LORD'S Supper ; the Eucharistic Elements being considered as Emblems commemorative of That Transcendant Instance of DIVINE Compassion, the Incarnation and Sufferings of The SON of GOD for the Redemption of lost Mankind ; and, pre-eminently in that Consummation of His Devotedness to that Object, in Himself Becoming Submissive to death, even the death of the Cross, for us miserable Sinners, who lay fast bound in the subtle bonds of Satan, overwhelmed with the sinfulness of our Nature. And not only did He thus Rescue us from Destruction and Eternal Punishment, but Restored to us the Gift of the Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT, for Which we should fervently pray ; for Thereby alone, through faith in the Equal Necessity and Sufficiency of That MEDIATORIAL Sacrifice, we are Rendered so Perfect in Holiness as to become meet to be Partakers of The KINGDOM of GOD.

*JESUS Took Bread, and Blessed It.* To Man, bread is said to be the staff of Life, and every thing, amidst the general abundance of this Provision for us by the Gracious Providence of GOD, should ever be received with thanksgiving. *But Man liveth not by bread alone, but by every Word That Proceedeth out of the Mouth of GOD.* And That is the Bread, Whereof if we eat gratefully, we shall be so satisfied, as not to hunger more even unto Eternal Life. For the natural bread, as we eat it for the Body's sustenance, we should bless The Merciful GIVER of it : but we should not fail to offer more exalted praise, and evince a deeper gratitude for the far more Abundant and Unfailing Supply of That SPIRITUAL Food in CHRIST JESUS, Which Strengtheneth and Refresheth the Soul.

*And Brake it, and Gave to His Disciples.* *Do good unto All, especially unto Those, that are of the Household of Faith!* Let the bread that we receive at the Hand of The LORD, be broken, not selfishly for our own exclusive use and gratification, whilst Creatures of the same flesh and blood with ourselves share but with our dogs the crumbs that fall from our table ; but let us freely give and gladly distribute to Others that have need, in the spirit of Christian hospitality and active Brotherly love ! Not only to Such as may spread the banquet to us in return, but to the poorer Brethren in CHRIST, who can only repay us by their prayers for our Spiritual good.

The Papal doctrine of Transubstantiation is so obviously unsound and unwarranted by Scripture, that dispassionate and unprejudiced examination will confute it : and it will be borne in mind that the Bread, Which CHRIST Himself Gave, Saying, "*Take, eat! This is My Body,*" was both Given and eaten, whilst His Body was Entire, and the Latter could not, therefore, virtually have been Incorporated with the former. The Disciples and Apostles, instead of eating That Bread with gladness and singleness of heart, as, doubtless, they did, would have paused at the idea of eating the Very Flesh of their beloved and

adored MASTER and LORD, and would have urged their scruples upon Him, and have, at least, called for their removal, before they would have ventured so to eat. The whole, that was Meant by our SAVIOUR, and understood by His Disciples, it is only reasonable to conclude, was the acceptance of the Bread and Wine, so emphatically Offered, as Symbols of the Actual Offering of The Body and Blood of CHRIST, then on the Eve of being Made, to the hour and power of Darkness and Death, that Man, repenting and believing Man, might be Raised from the power of Satan unto GOD, from Eternal Death and the pit of Everlasting Destruction to the exalted State of his original Nature, as a Pure Spirit of Heaven, Redeemed by CHRIST'S Mediation, and Sanctified unto the Ever-beaming Countenance of The ALMIGHTY, by The HOLY GHOST having the full and undivided Possession of his Soul. It was a Substitute for the Passover Sacrifice of the Paschal Lamb, Its type, and, alike with that, a Commemorative Sacrifice; and a Call for thanksgiving, and an increase of Grace.

In partaking of This Last Supper with the Holy Apostles, and Martyrs and Saints of all Ages and Degrees, from Generation to Generation, since Its first Institution, as in spirit we may consider ourselves as doing, we should not suppose that, though A Body was Prepared for Him, A Body was All that CHRIST Gave in Sacrifice for us. Many of those Apostles and Martyrs and Saints gave, and All were willing to have given, their bodies unto Him, and to His Cause and Glory; and yet thereby, though superadded to CHRIST'S Offering of Himself, could they not Save the Soul of a Brother. The Bodily Sufferings of CHRIST were but a Shadow of any Image that the mind could form of the Sufferings in SPIRIT of The SON of GOD, when upon Him were Laid the iniquities of us All. Fully to estimate the Nature or Value of His Sacrificial Intercession for us is not Given unto us here, but, as far as our finite capacities can be extended, we should lead them to contemplate and dwell on This Mystery of DIVINE Condescension and Surpassing Proof of Tenderness and Love; and to that end should weigh in our minds, first, What CHRIST Gave up; second, For what Purpose Such Unequalled Surrender was Made; third, The Means Used for Attaining That Purpose and End. First, CHRIST, though Despising not the prison of the womb, and Coming as Man into this World, in all the helplessness and dependancy of Infancy, yet came not, like Man, without having had any Previous Existence till His Earthly Mother's conception of Him. No: He Came with All the Consciousness of DIVINITY within Him, and of an Existence before this World was, or Creation thought of, even from Everlasting; He Came under a Sense of having Left, for a Season, the Pure and Perfect State of Bliss and the Exercise of Omnipotence in the Fulness of The GODHEAD. And, Oh! What an inconceivable Exertion of Condescension and Mercy the Exchange must have been of Such an Exclusive and Glorious Union amidst Purity and Holiness the most Perfect, for a Communing with Man in his fallen and rebellious state, Embodying His Righteous SPIRIT in the weak and perishable condition of Human Nature, and Submitting to be, in all respects, like Man, sin only excepted; to Pass also a Life in suffering from the rejection, the resistance, the persecution, and the cruelty inflicted on Him, even by them, whom He Came, in Such Meekness and Goodness and Tenderness of Love, to Save and Sanctify for Eternity: Having, amidst His Ceaseless Hatred to sin, His Pure and Immaculate and Holy SPIRIT Assailed with the daily and hourly witnessing the pollutions and perverseness of a World of Sinners. What sorrow could be like unto His Sorrow? yet All was Patiently Endured, that every One, who had faith to be so Saved, might have Remission of sin, and be Made meet to be an Inheritor of The KINGDOM of GOD. Second, This was the Great End, for which This Surpassing Proof of DIVINE

Love was Manifested; to Redeem our Souls from Destruction; to Restore to us the Image of our MAKER; to Fill us full of the Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT, that, as did Adam before his rejection of DIVINE Counsel, so we might walk with GOD, without other than hallowed fear, having our Souls sustained by the liveliness of our faith in CHRIST JESUS, as our SAVIOUR, and hailing Him with gratitude as The SOURCE of our hope of Salvation and Glorification; that we, who, though Mortal here, shall be Immortal Hereafter, might put on that Immortality, and use it to the Glory of GOD, in Communion with All the Host of Heaven; that the Power of Satan might be utterly and for ever destroyed in us; and that, from being the Children of Wrath with Everlasting Destruction only as our Self-merited portion, we might become the Children of DIVINE Grace. This was the Great End for Which CHRIST Came into the World; and its Accomplishment is still the more Wonderful, when it is considered that His Own Property (if such a term may be used,) in Heavenly Joy and in the Perfection of Happiness could not thereby be increased, since, to suppose that might seem to involve, in some degree of precariousness, That Unequalled and Unbroken Peace and Joy, That must Coexist with OMNIPOTENCE. Third, The Means of Attaining This, to us so Glorious and Gracious and Acceptable, End, are reconcileable to our notions of Eternal Justice; Man having thrown off his allegiance to his Heavenly KING; and, even the Best among us, having lived, if not in continual, yet in too general unmindfulness, or rejection even of the Stirring and Reproving, the Warning and Admonishing Voice of The HOLY SPIRIT, as Uttered in The Holy Scriptures or speaking through the conscience, thereby became unfitted for the Pure and Holy State of Heavenly Communion, and incurred, with the Displeasure of The MOST HIGH, not only a forfeiture of All His Gracious Promises, but a liability to That Sentence of Condemnation and Punishment, Which Awaits the Wicked in the Day of Judgment. Future obedience, even if unvaryingly rendered, (though how improbable this!) could not have atoned for past transgressions, much less could it have given title to the inestimable and exhaustless Delights of Heavenly Adoption. Which were alone Promised by GOD on condition of walking in All the Ordinances of The LORD blameless. But unsinning obedience is not in Man, except where the Fulness of The HOLY GHOST is Poured out upon him; and even if It were, Man could only hope thereby to obtain Salvation for himself; he could not compensate for the deficiencies of a Brother, much less for the Souls of All, who have come short of the Glory and KINGDOM of GOD. Neither could the Angels of Heaven; for they are but the Servants of GOD, and are inestimably Gifted and Encircled with His Favour, and cannot, even by an unfailling observance of His Will, establish a claim beyond The DIVINE Promise to an Endless Continuance of Such Love unto themselves, much less to a Propitiation for the offendings of Another Order of Created Beings, such as Mankind. It was, therefore, in The SON of GOD Alone, that a Reasonable, Perfect, and Sufficient Sacrifice, Oblation and Satisfaction for the sins of the Whole World could be Made: and, Blessed be GOD, through JESUS CHRIST, our LORD, That Expiation hath been Made to the unspeakable Consolation and Holy hope of All them, that have true faith therein; and who, by repentance, not to be repented of, by a steadfast devotion to the Service and Glory of GOD, by an humble reliance on His Continual and Effectual Protection, by an earnest and fervent supplication for the Gifts of The HOLY SPIRIT to Guide and Keep in the Way of all Truth and Wisdom and Righteousness and Holiness, and by all labours of love and Brotherly and Sisterly charity, work out their Salvation with fear and trembling.

△ St. Mark's record of This especially interesting Incident in the Gospel

History, is as follows: *And, as They did Eat, JESUS Took Bread and Blessed and Brake It, and Gave to them, and Said, "Take, Eat, This is My Body!" And He Took the Cup; and when He had Given Thanks, He Gave It to them; and they All drank of It: And He Said unto them, "This is My Blood of The New Testament, Which is Shed for Many. Verily, I Say unto you, I will Drink no more of the Fruit of the Vine, until That Day, that I Drink It New in The KINGDOM of GOD."*—Chap. xiv, 22 to 25.

The only thing observable in Which, as compared with That by St. Matthew, is, that the former leaves that to inference, of which the latter makes the express mention: St. Mark confining his Report to our SAVIOUR'S Declaration that *His Blood was Shed for Many*: and St. Matthew adding "*for the Remission of sins.*" *They that are whole, need not a Physician; but they that are sick: and CHRIST Came not to Call the Righteous but Sinners to repentance.* The Many, therefore, for whom CHRIST'S Body was Given and His Blood Shed, are Those, who, knowing the impurities and infirmities of their Nature, acknowledge them with deep contrition of Soul, and seek unto Him, Who is Alone Able and Willing to Save, to Relieve them from their intolerable burden, and to Wash them Clean from their impurities in the *Blood Shed by Him, as The LAMB of GOD, Slain from the foundation of the World; that He might Purify to Himself a People zealous of good works*; and Present them to His Heavenly FATHER when so Reconciled unto them through Him, Who so Ransomed them from the grasp of Satan, and the power of sin; Turning them from Darkness to Light, and from the Second Death to Eternal Life.

St. Luke's Narrative is thus: *And He Took Bread and Gave Thanks, and Brake It, and Gave unto them, Saying, "This is My Body, Which is Given for you: This do in Remembrance of Me!" Likewise also the Cup after Supper; Saying, "This Cup is the New Testament in My Blood, Which is Shed for you!"*—Chap. xxii, 19, 20. This Evangelist most pointedly thus adverts to the Great Object, for Which This Supper of our SAVIOUR with His Disciples was so pre-eminently Distinguished, namely, That It should be the foundation of an Ordinance for commemorating, through that and succeeding Generations, the Gracious Sacrifice Offered up by CHRIST in His Incarnation and Sufferings, as the Price of Redeeming penitent and converted Sinners, who seek, by faith in Him and dependance on the DIVINE Promises, the Grace of Regeneration and Sanctification unto their Immortal Souls. The Blood of CHRIST was the Seal of the New Testament or Covenant of Everlasting Peace, Which, in virtue of CHRIST'S Intercession for Man, GOD hath in His Thus Evenly Balanced Justice and Mercy Made with Man; Whereby he may have Life and Peace and Joy in The HOLY GHOST for Ever and Ever, if he have but a lively and abiding Faith in CHRIST and be Found in Him.

It has happened that St. John has not noticed This Circumstance in the History he has left of his LORD and MASTER, though, in Chapter xiii, 2, he mentions the Supper; and was, on That Occasion, the Disciple lying on JESUS' Breast, and was made, by the other Disciple, the Organ of questioning Him as to His Predicted Betrayer. But it is material to consider that he wrote his account of The Gospel long subsequently to the other Evangelists, and that his aim was rather to supply their deficiency, and to obviate doubts that had arisen in different Members of the Christian Profession, than to confirm Doctrines and Practices universally acknowledged and acquiesced in amongst them, as This Sacrament unquestionably then was: for though St. John records not the Institution of This Sacrament, he adduces abundant reason for the observance of It, in the narrative of our SAVIOUR'S Indication of Himself as The Heavenly MANNA, and The True BREAD of Life: *JESUS Said, "Verily, Verily, I Say unto you,*

*My FATHER Giveth you The True Bread from Heaven: for The Bread of GOD is He, Which Cometh down from Heaven, and Giveth Life unto the World."* Then said they unto Him, "LORD, evermore Give us This Bread!" And JESUS Said unto them, "I am The BREAD of Life: he, that cometh to Me, shall never hunger: and he, that believeth on Me, shall never thirst! I am The Living BREAD, Which Came down from Heaven. If any Man eat of This BREAD, he shall live for ever; and The Bread, That I will Give, is My Flesh; Which I will Give for the Life of the World." The Jews, therefore, strove among themselves, saying, "How can this Man give us his flesh to eat?" Then JESUS Said unto them, "Verily, Verily, I Say unto you, Except ye eat the Flesh of The SON of Man, and drink His Blood, ye have no Life in you! Whoso eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood, hath Eternal Life; and I will Raise him up at the Last Day: for My Flesh is Meat indeed; and My Blood is Drink indeed. He, that eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him. As The Living FATHER hath Sent Me, and I Live by The FATHER, so he, that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me. This is That BREAD, Which Came down from Heaven: not as your Fathers did eat Manna, and are dead: he, that eateth of This BREAD, shall live for Ever!"—John vi, 32 to 35. 51, to 58. And St. John himself said, This is He, That Came by Water and Blood, even JESUS CHRIST: not by Water only, but by Water and Blood.—1 John v, 6.

△ St. Paul, however, on finding This Appointed Ordinance made the occasion of sin by the blasphemy of Some of the sensual Corinthians, asserts Its DIVINE Origin, and the Revelation of It to Himself, by Its Gracious FOUNDER; for he says, *There must be heresies among you, that they, which are Approved, may be made manifest among you: when ye come together, therefore, into one place, this is not to eat The LORD'S Supper: for in eating, every One taketh before Other his own supper; and One is hungry, and Another is drunken. What! have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the Church of GOD; and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I praise you not. For I have received of The LORD That, Which also I delivered unto you, "That The LORD JESUS, the same night in which He was betrayed, Took Bread; and when He had Given Thanks, He Brake It, and Said, "Take, eat, This is My Body, Which is Broken for you: This do, in Remembrance of Me!" After the Same Manner also He Took the Cup, when He had Supped, Saying, "This Cup is The New Testament in My Blood: This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in Remembrance of Me!"* For (adds the Apostle,) as often as ye eat This Bread, and drink This Cup, ye do shew The LORD'S Death, till He Come. Wherefore (and the reasoning we shall do well to apply closely to ourselves and our own hearts, in the preparation for and celebration of This Holy Institution,) *Whosoever shall eat This Bread and drink This Cup of The LORD unworthily, shall be guilty of The Body and Blood of The LORD! But let a Man examine himself; and so let him eat of That Bread and drink of That Cup. For he, that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh Damnation to himself, not discerning The LORD'S Body.*—1 Cor. xi, 19 to 29. And in another part of the same Epistle, where the Apostle is urging the fleeing from idolatry, he adverts to the same Sacramental Appointment as actually in use, and forming a generally understood and adopted part of the Christian Dispensation and Discipline, saying, *The Cup of Blessing, which we bless, is It not the Communion of The Blood of CHRIST? The Bread, which we brake, is It not the Communion of the Body of CHRIST? For we, being Many, are one Bread and one Body; for we are all Partakers of That One BREAD. Ye cannot drink the Cup of The LORD, and the cup of Devils! Ye cannot be Partakers of The LORD'S Table, and the table of Devils.*—Chap. i. 14. 16, 17. 21. Thus treating of the Eucharistic Sacrament as an established

custom and prevailing practice amongst the early Christians; and awfully drawing the line of distinction between Such as joined in It with a pious and becoming sense of Its extreme Importance, and Those, by whom It was lightly esteemed and irreverently engaged in: characterizing the Former by the principle of devotional Union actuating them, as though they were compounded together in one lump, which the Graces of The SPIRIT, through the efficacy of faith in CHRIST, should Leaven; embodying one Spiritual Nourishment thereby, and forming them into Members of That Union, of Which CHRIST is The HEAD.

As the Covenant in the Old Testament was Sealed with the blood of innocent Victims to typify the more solemn Attestation That Awaited the Introduction of The Gospel Covenant of Atonement and Reconciliation, so in Fulfilment of That Figurative Prophecy was the New Testament, when Completed, Sealed with the Pure and Inestimably Precious Blood of CHRIST, Who, as a lamb without blemish, was Led to the Slaughter, and Slain for the transgressions of His People. The Seal of the Old Covenant was thus described: *Moses took half of the blood of the peace offerings of oxen made unto The LORD, and put it in basons, and half of the blood he sprinkled on the Altar; and he took the Book of the Covenant, and read in the audience of the People, and they said, "All that The LORD hath Said, will we do, and be obedient!" And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the People, and said, "Behold, the Blood of the Covenant, Which The LORD hath Made with you concerning All These Words."*—Exod. xxiv, 5 to 8. If gratitude drew from the Israelites this solemn pledge of obedience for the Revelation of DIVINE Promises, Ushered in with Thunderings and much Awfulness, how much more are Christians bound to turn their hearts unto The DIVINE Testimonials of the Fulfilment of Those Promises in The MESSIAH, Who, as the Resurrection and the Life, hath Called us out of gross Natural darkness unto His Spiritual Light; Who, by His Love to us, hath Won upon The FATHER to Speak Pardon and Peace to our Souls, if we come to Him in the faith of His Blood-shedding SON. This, indeed, in our Baptism we promised to do. *The LORD Spake unto Moses, Saying, "The life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have Given it to you upon the Altar to make an Atonement for your Souls: for it is the Blood, That Maketh an Atonement for the Soul."*—Lev. xvii, 1. 11. And shall The Same LORD have Habited His Glorious and Only Begotten SON in the mean garb of His Creatures' Nature, Confining His SPIRIT within a tabernacle of flesh, Subjecting Him to its infirmities, and Exposing Him to Sufferings, till at last in Agony His Life was Poured out in His Blood-Shedding, that He might Fulfil the Typified Atonement for the Souls of Mankind: and yet, shall we refuse to drink of That Blood, in Its Appointed Emblem, and to bless and give thanks, from the ground of the heart, for Such Inestimable Means of Salvation? Forbid it Prudence, Justice, Wisdom, as well as Holy Love! The New Testament or Covenant, of Which the Blood of CHRIST, in His Natural Body, is the Seal, and Himself, in His SPIRIT, The PRIEST and OFFERER, had been long previously foretold through the instrumentality of One of His Prophets, and interpreted in its true sense and meaning, as having a Spiritual Signification: *"Behold, the Days come, Saith The LORD, that I will Make a New Covenant with the House of Israel, and with the House of Judah: not according to the Covenant That I Made with their Fathers, in the Day that I Took them by the hand, to Bring them out of the Land of Egypt: Which My Covenant they brake, although I was An HUSBAND unto them, Saith The LORD. But This shall be the Covenant, That I will Make with the House of Israel: After those days, Saith The LORD, I will Put My Law in their inward parts, and Write It in their hearts; and will be their GOD; and they shall be My People. And they shall teach no more every Man his Neighbour, and every Man*

*his Brother, saying, 'Know The LORD!' For they shall All know Me, from the Least of them unto the Greatest of them, Saith The LORD: for I will Forgive their iniquity, and I will Remember their sin no more."*—Jer. xxxi, 31 to 34.

△ The days have come and will continue to come, in all Ages and Generations, to the hearts of the Faithful, unto Whom the knowledge of The LORD is Revealed, and unto whom The KINGDOM of HEAVEN is Nigh. And to us, therefore, the Same Blessed Tidings of Redemption, in the Forgiveness of iniquity and the Forgetfulness of sin, are now Graciously Uttered, if we will but repent and believe and be baptized in spirit and in truth: and The New Covenant for Eternal Peace and Joy in The HOLY GHOST will then also be Established in us; being Gifted, likewise, with the Life that is, in the richness of Christian hope, as well as having the Promise of That, Which is to Come. But how shall we escape, if we neglect so Great Salvation? In Chapter xx, 28, JESUS had before Declared, *That He, The SON of Man, Came to Give His Life a Ransom for Many*: And He Adds here, *for the Remission of sin*. And St. Paul Saith, *CHRIST Died for the Ungodly*: [Rom. v, 6.] and again, *That GOD Commendeth His Love toward us, in that, while we were yet Sinners, CHRIST Died for us!* and, declaring that, *being Justified by Faith, we have Peace with GOD through our LORD JESUS CHRIST*. Much more doth GOD Commend His Love toward us, in that *being now Justified by His Blood, we shall be Saved from Wrath through Him!* for if, (adds the Apostle,) *when we were Enemies, we were Reconciled to GOD by the Death of His SON, much more, being Reconciled, we shall be Saved by His Life: and not only so, but we also joy in GOD through our LORD JESUS CHRIST; by Whom we have now Received the Atonement*. Wherefore, as by one Man, (Adam, who is the figure of Him That was to Come,) *sin entered into the World, and Death by sin; and so Death passed upon all Men, for that All have sinned; therefore, as by the offence of One Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation; even so by the Righteousness of ONE, The Free Gift Came upon all Men unto Justification of Life: for, as by one Man's disobedience, Many were made Sinners: so, by the Obedience of ONE, shall Many be Made Righteous!* Moreover the Law entered, *that the offence might abound: but where sin abounded, Grace did much more Abound; that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might Grace reign, through Righteousness, unto Eternal Life by JESUS CHRIST, our LORD*.—Rom. v, 1. 8 to 12. 18 to 21. Thus not only did CHRIST Come in the Mystery of DIVINE Love to Atonement, by His Enduring our Nature and the Sufferings thereof, even unto Death, for the sins of Mankind, and to Save Such, as will come unto Him, from the Punishment due unto their sins; but to Give Holiness and Happiness, in Life and Glory Everlasting, in the Experience of DIVINE Reconciliation and Favour. The Inspired Writer, in his reasoning with the Hebrews on the insufficiency of the Old Testament to justify, amidst all its requirements, and urging the necessity and adequacy of the New, strengthens the indispensable Doctrine of the Atonement by the Blood of CHRIST, and the Benefits Which Many do, and All might receive Thereby. *The Law made nothing perfect, as found no One so; but the bringing in of a Better Hope did; by the Which we draw nigh unto GOD*. And inasmuch as not without an Oath He (CHRIST) was Made PRIEST, (for Priests were made without an oath, but This with an Oath by Him, That Said unto Him, "The LORD Swore, and will not Repent, Thou art a PRIEST for Ever, after the Order of Melchisedec: Ps. cx, 4.) by so much was JESUS Made A SURETY of a Better Testament: And they truly were many Priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: but This Man, because He Continueth Ever, hath an Unchangeable PRIESTHOOD, wherefore He is Able also to Save them to the uttermost, that come unto GOD by Him:

seeing He Ever Liveth to Make Intercession for them. For Such An HIGH PRIEST Became us, Who is Holy, Harmless, Undefiled, Separate from Sinners, and Made Higher than the Heavens; Who Needeth not daily, as those High Priests, to Offer up Sacrifice, first for His Own sins, and then for the People's; for This He did Once, when He Offered up Himself. For the Law maketh Men High Priests, which have infirmity; but the Word of the Oath, Which was since the Law, Maketh The SON, Who is Consecrated for Evermore.—Heb. vii, 19 to 28. And in another part of the same Epistle, the Writer continues: Now hath CHRIST Obtained a more Excellent MINISTRY; by how much also He is The MEDIATOR of a Better Covenant, Which was Established upon Better Promises: for if That First Covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the Second. But, Finding fault with them, He Saith, “Behold, the Days Come, Saith The LORD, when I will Make a New Covenant with the House of Israel and the House of Judah [as before quoted from Jer. xxxi, 31, &c.] In that He Saith, A New Covenant; He hath Made the First old.—Heb. viii, 6 to 8. 13. And again, CHRIST, being Come An HIGH PRIEST of Good Things to come, by a Greater and more Perfect Tabernacle, than That of the First Covenant, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this Building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His Own Blood, He Entered in Once into the Holy Place; having Obtained Eternal Redemption for us: for if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer, sprinkling the Unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the Blood of CHRIST, Who, through The Eternal SPIRIT, Offered Himself, without spot, to GOD, Purge your conscience from dead works to serve The Living GOD! And for This Cause He is The MEDIATOR of the New Testament, that by Means of (His) Death for the Redemption of the transgressions, that were under the First Testament, they, which are Called, might receive the Promise of Eternal Inheritance: [Heb. ix, 11 to 15.] for, adds the Writer, Almost all things were by the Law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood was no Remission: it was, therefore, (as the Writer continues to reason,) necessary that the Patterns of Things in the Heavens should be Purified with these: But the Heavenly Things themselves with Better Sacrifices than these. For CHRIST is not Entered into the Holy Places, made with hands, which are the figures of the True, but into Heaven Itself, now to Appear in The Presence of GOD for us: nor yet that He should Offer Himself often, as the High Priest entereth into the Holy Place every year with blood of Others; for then must He often have Suffered since the foundation of the World: but now Once hath He Appeared to Put away sin, by the Sacrifice of Himself. And, as it is Appointed unto Men once to die, but after this the Judgment; so CHRIST was Once Offered to Bear the sins of Many. And unto them, that look for Him, shall He Appear the Second Time without sin unto Salvation [Heb. ix, 22 to 28]. For the Law, having a shadow of Good Things to Come, and not the very image of the Things, can never, with those sacrifices, which they offered year by year continually, make the Comers thereunto perfect; for then would they not have ceased to be offered, because that the Worshippers, once purged, should have had no more conscience of sins: but in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year; for it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins: wherefore, when He Cometh into the World, He Saith, [Ps. xl, 6, 7, 8, &c.] “Sacrifice and Offering Thou Wouldest not; but A Body hast Thou Prepared Me: in burnt Offerings and Sacrifices for sin Thou hast had no Pleasure; then said I, Lo I Come (in the Volume of the Book it is Written of Me,) to Do Thy Will, O GOD!” Above, when He Said, Sacrifice and Offering and burnt Offering and Offering for sin Thou Wouldest not, neither hadst Pleasure therein; which are offered by the Law; then said I, Lo, I Come to Do Thy Will, O GOD!” HE



*Taketh away the First, that He may Establish the Second. By the Which Will we are Sanctified, through the Offering of The Body of JESUS CHRIST Once for All. And every Priest standeth daily ministering and offering often times the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: but This MAN, after He had Offered One Sacrifice for sins, for Ever Sat down on the Right Hand of GOD; from henceforth Expecting till His Enemies be Made His Footstool [Ps. cx, 1]. For by One Offering He hath Perfected for Ever them that are Sanctified; whereof The HOLY GHOST also is a Witness to us: for after that He had Said before, [Jer. xxxi, 33.] "This is the Covenant That I will Make with them after those days, Saith The LORD, I will Put My Laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I Write them: and their sins and iniquities will I Remember no more." Now where Remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin. Having, therefore, Brethren, (and the exhortation and encouragement are equally applicable to ourselves, and we shall do well to lay them to our hearts, and let their influence shine forth in our Lives and conversation,) boldness to enter into the Holiest, by the Blood of JESUS, by a New and Living Way, Which He hath Consecrated for us through the Veil, that is to say, His Flesh: and, having An HIGH PRIEST over The House of GOD, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of Faith; having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our Bodies washed with pure water! Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, (for He is Faithful That Promised,) and let us consider One Another to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of Ourselves together, as the manner of Some is, but exhorting One Another; and so much the more, as we see the day approaching! For if we sin wilfully, after that we have received the knowledge of the Truth, there remaineth no more Sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking-for of Judgment and Fiery indignation, Which shall Devour the Adversaries. He, that despised Moses' law, [Deut. xvii, 2. 6.] died without mercy under two or three Witnesses; of how much sorer Punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot The SON of GOD, and hath counted the Blood of The COVENANT, Wherewith he was Sanctified, an unholy thing; and hath done despite unto The SPIRIT of Grace! For we know Him That hath Said, [Deut. xxxii, 35.] "Vengeance Belongeth unto Me, I will Recompense," Saith The LORD! And Again, [Deut. xxxii, 36; Ps. l, 4, cxxxv, 14.] The LORD shall Judge His People. It is a fearful thing to fall into the Hands of The Living GOD! Cast not away, therefore, your confidence, which hath great recompense of Reward! For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the Will of GOD, ye might receive the Promise; for, yet a little while, and He, That shall Come, will Come, and will not Tarry.—Heb. x, 1 to 31. 35 to 37.*

△ This Part of our SAVIOUR'S Address was probably Intended to Impress more strongly upon the minds of His Disciples the Approaching Catastrophe. Which was to separate Him from them for a time; an Event so near, that this was the last Meal which They should Share together ere It Took place; and to Impart to them the Renewed Assurance, so Calculated to Afford them Comfort under the afflictive Separation, that a Reunion in CHRIST'S Spiritual KINGDOM Awaited All who persevered unto the end; when, with an infinitely higher zest, the Cup of Salvation would be Administered unto them unmixed with any bitterness of grief or anxiety or tears of repentance, and would be theirs through the never-ending Feast of the Marriage of The LAMB and His Bride, The Church Triumphant; even the Souls of All Saints in the Spiritual Church of GOD. To be Called to the Everlasting Fellowship of The SPIRIT with The Man CHRIST JESUS, in the Love of GOD; to drink with Him the Wine of Astonishing Delight at The DIVINE Mercy; to learn from Him the

Pleasing and Acceptable Lesson of gratitude and Holy joy; and to celebrate, in Holy Conviviality, the Loving-Kindness of CHRIST, will be indeed a Feast for the Soul, of Which no adequate conception can here be formed, and the blessed expectancy of Which we should All fervently pray for and steadfastly seek after through the remainder of our Lives. The Passage, as given by St. Mark, is thus: "*Verily, I Say unto you, I will Drink no more of the fruit of the Vine, until That Day, that I Drink It New in the KINGDOM of GOD.*"—Chap. xiv, 25.

That from St. Luke is as follows: "*For I Say unto you, I will not Drink of the fruit of the Vine, until The KINGDOM of GOD shall Come.*"—Chap. xxii, 18.

It appears, by the Gospel according to St. John, that our SAVIOUR, after His Resurrection and before His Ascension, Dined with His Disciples off of *bread and boiled fish*.—John xxi, 12, 13. And in the Record of the Acts of the Apostles it is stated that *GOD Shewed Him unto them, who did eat and drink with Him after He Rose from the Dead*.—Acts x, 41. But it is not stated that wine was drank on the occasion; and, therefore, it must be inferred that the letter of the Text was observed; and that, according to it, the Reservation of That Feast, Which, like All Heavenly Felicities, is infinitely beyond both our expectation and present conception, is still Made both for Apostles and All Others of the Household of Faith; when the Kingdoms of this World shall become The KINGDOM of The LORD and of His CHRIST, and He shall Reign for Ever and Ever; and when All People, whom He hath Chosen, of what Nations, or Languages, or Generations soever they be, shall flow unto Him for Salvation; and when His Foes shall be made His Footstool, Then shall That Pledge of Interminable Affection be Given, and the rich and grateful Contents of the Cup of Heavenly Consolation be Poured out; typified as They are on Earth by the wine that maketh glad the heart of Man, and by the communion of Saints in the participation of the Elements of the Body and Blood of CHRIST at the Altar of GOD.

And when They had Sung an Hymn, They went out into the Mount of Olives. Then saith JESUS unto them, "All ye shall be offended because of Me this night: for it is Written, 'I will Smite The SHEPHERD, and the Sheep of the Flock shall be scattered abroad!' But after I am Risen again, I will Go before you into Galilee."—30 to 32.

What Heavenly Harmony must have then floated upon Earth: The SON of GOD Himself Leading the Band of tuneful gratitude and praise! How Acceptable must have been the Sounds to every ear; how impressive on the heart must have been the Sense, when so pleasingly and attractively introduced to it! Solemn, sweet, and slow the Accent must have fanned the flame of Spiritual Fire; and The Holy SON of David in Spirit have Rejoiced in GOD, Making Melody in His Heart in the words of that sweet Psalmist of Israel: for the Hymn Chosen for the Great Occasion is universally allowed to have been Part of the great Hallel or Song of praise, comprising that portion of the Psalms from the 113th to the 118th inclusively. What a powerful Incentive is here offered, in the Example of our LORD and MASTER, to sing with the spirit and to sing with the understanding also; to awaken all the powers of harmony, which are implanted in our Nature, and to dedicate them, with reverence and judgment, to the Glory of our GOD.

*Forget not the assembling of yourselves together as the manner of Some is!* saith St. Paul. And thus have we, in CHRIST Himself, an Exemplary Instance of one of the objects of such communion. Let us, therefore, as *Children of the Spiritual Zion, be joyful in our Heavenly KING!*

The corresponding Passage in the Gospel by St Mark is, in almost every word the same [Mark xiv, 26 to 28].

Fervently as His Disciples had joined with Him in the Hymn, and fondly as they had hung upon His Lips in their way to the Mount, which was His Favourite Resort, they little expected that a charge of apostacy would be Laid, by anticipation, against every One of them, and still less, perhaps, could have suspected its just application. But such is the weakness of the Human heart, that when it foregoes its dependance on DIVINE Guidance, and trusts to its own powers, it fearfully fails. To the continual Help of DIVINE Grace, therefore, should we frame our minds to look, that we may be Kept by It unto the end; and may not confide in the momentary and, too often, transitory impulses of our imaginations, and in presumptuous reliance on a firmness, that may not abide with us even under the weakest of our trials! Since, though we may sometimes hear and receive DIVINE Truth with gladness and sincerity of heart, we may, as Others far more gifted than ourselves have done, in time of temptation, fall away; and our dependance, being on ourselves, and not on the supplicated Arm of GOD, may, and doubtless will, fail us in the fearful time of need. To deny CHRIST, or what is, in effect, oftentimes nearly the same, not to acknowledge Him, or to avow our faith in Him, is, figuratively, to be offended because of Him: and woe unto that Man, by whom such an offence cometh; for of him shall The SON of Man be Ashamed, when He Cometh in His KINGDOM. But the fulness of Faith was not as yet in the Disciples; for the Fulness of CHRIST'S DIVINITY was not as yet Made Manifest to them, as It afterwards was by His Resurrection and Ascension; for when It then was, no peril of death could deter them from confessing CHRIST to be The SON of GOD, and even glorifying in persecution for His Sake and in testimony of His GODHEAD. To us, however, the Greatness of Those Truths has been Graciously Unfolded, and we shall, therefore, be left without excuse, if we be offended or be ashamed because of Him, Who, through Pure Love to us, Suffered even unto Death in Spirit as well as Body, inconceivable Anguish, that our offences might be Blotted out of The DIVINE Record, and our Pardon Sealed in His Blood. Not on Mount Calvary alone was The Great SHEPHERD of Israel Smitten; but whenever greater honour is paid to Another than to Him, (to whom All Honour is so richly due,) there also is He Smitten, and then also is it that, through the weakness of their faith, His Flock is scattered abroad. Amongst professing Christians, and even Such as occasionally more than profess that character, the fear of incurring the ridicule and contumely of the Sensual and Worldly-minded, leads, but too often, to silent rejection, if not to an open denial of CHRIST. Against such a base abandonment of Him, Who Gave Himself A Free-Will Offering and Expiatory Sacrifice for our sins, and Whose Love towards us is the Consummation of DIVINE Compassion, let us pray fervently and perseveringly; and that the Power of The HOLY GHOST may continually Fortify and Defend us, lest we be scattered everlastingly from the Fold of CHRIST, and excluded from the Pale of Salvation. For They only, that are His at His Coming, will be Led into the Pastures of Safety, and drink of the Water of Life freely; and Where All will be Peace and Holy Rest and Perfect Joy for ever and ever. Whilst They, that are set apart and Rejected from the Bosom and Blessing of A SAVIOUR-GOD, will be Doomed to a Famine both of the Peace and Word of GOD, and will experience bitterness and anguish and despair amidst remorse and unceasing Self-condemnation.

The Passage Referred to by our SAVIOUR is taken from One of the Minor Prophets, and is thus introduced and observed upon: "*Awake, O Sword, against My SHEPHERD, and against The Man, That is My FELLOW!*"

*Saith The LORD of Hosts? Smite The SHEPHERD, and the Sheep shall be scattered: and I will Turn Mine Hand upon the Little Ones. And it shall come to pass, that in all the Land, Saith The LORD, two Parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein: and I will Bring the third Part through the fire, and will Refine them, as silver is refined, and will Try them, as gold is tried: they shall call on My Name, and I will Hear them; I will Say, It is My People: and they shall say, 'The LORD is My GOD.'*"—Zech. xiii, 7 to 9.

May we praise The Name of The LORD, that we may glory in His Salvation! May the Refining Grace of His HOLY SPIRIT Prepare our hearts for the fulness of a lively Faith in CHRIST JESUS, exemplified in the patience of hope, in the works of charity, in all the fervour of devotion, and in the beauty of Holiness! Our Blessed REDEEMER, with a Condescension truly Marvellous, had Pronounced His Benediction on Such as *should not be offended in Him*: [Chap. xi, 6.] and here, though with the Sure Word of Prophecy, He Forewarns His Disciples of their approaching desertion of Him, yet does He not Discard them for their ingratitude, or Use the slightest Expression of Resentment against them; but Seems only to Announce, by Anticipation, the fact, with a view to confirm their faith in His DIVINITY and in His Mediatorial Office, when it should happen; and, by repentance, Bring them back to their duty as His Disciples.

In the Gospel according to St. John there is a Passage, which is extremely similar to That in the Text, and which demonstrates the strong, but mistaken, confidence the Disciples had in their own steadfastness in the faith; and confirms the Merciful View and Object of our SAVIOUR in Foretelling their being offended in Him. *JESUS Said unto His Disciples, "I Came forth from The FATHER, and am Come into the World: Again, I Leave the World, and Go to The FATHER!" His Disciples said unto Him, "We believe that Thou Camest forth from GOD." JESUS Answered them, "Do ye now believe? Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered every Man to his own, and shall leave Me Alone: and yet I am not Alone; because The FATHER is with Me. These Things I have Spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have Peace. In the World ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer! I have Overcome the World."*—John xvi, 19. 28 to 33.

With what Tenderness of Feeling was This Implied Remonstrance of our SAVIOUR Uttered; and with what Consolatory Prospects was It Terminated! "*But after I am Risen again, I will Go before you into Galilee.*" To Allay the fears of His deserting Flock, He Gave them the Comforting Assurance that He would not Desert them, though they would Him; and that though He should Himself be Cast down for a season, and be Placed under the bitterness of death and the darkness of the grave, yet would He not be utterly Forsaken of His FATHER. For though Made Subject to Death through this World's iniquities, which He Came to Expiate, yet would He Rise again, and through His Perfect Righteousness Put forth on Man's behalf, would Become The JUSTIFIER of All, who had faith to be so Saved in such fearful time of need. To the Fulfilment of every Part of This Prophecy the Sacred Writings bear ample testimony; for not only was CHRIST Abandoned by All His Disciples on His being betrayed by One, and Led to Judgment and Crucifixion, but He also Rose again the third day, and Went before His Disciples into Galilee: for the Angel, that sat at the entrance of the Sepulchre, after CHRIST'S Resurrection, said unto the Women when, in the tenderness and piety of their hearts, they drew near to it, "*Fear not ye! for I know that ye seek JESUS, Which was Crucified: He is not here: He is Risen, as He Said: come, see the Place, where The LORD Lay! and go quickly, and tell His Disciples that He is Risen from the Dead: and,*

*behold, He Goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see Him! Lo, I have told you!" And as they went to tell His Disciples, behold, JESUS Met them, Saying, "All Hail!" And they came, and held Him by the Feet, and worshipped Him! Then Said JESUS unto them, "Be not afraid! go tell My Brethren that they go into Galilee; and there shall they see Me!" Then the Eleven Disciples went away into Galilee, into a Mountain, where JESUS had Appointed them! And when they saw Him, they worshipped Him.—Chap. xxviii, 1, 2. 5 to 10. 16, 17.*

△ Peter answered, and said unto Him, "Though all Men shall be offended because of Thee, yet will I never be offended." JESUS Said unto him, "Verily, I Say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny Me thrice!" Peter said unto Him, "Though I should die with Thee, yet will I not deny Thee." Likewise also said All the Disciples.—33 to 35.

In all the earnestness of Self-confidence, and without the slightest doubt of their stability both in the faith and service of CHRIST, was this profession of attachment and devotedness to their LORD and MASTER made by Peter and the other Disciples; and had any One, but Himself, distrusted it, they would probably, have treated him with scorn and derision. But they depended on their own strength, and prayed not for the Succour and Support of Him, Who, though then to be Taken from them, and Subjected, for a season, to the Power of Darkness, would (had He Willed,) have Enabled them to endure the trial of their faith and to have come triumphant out of it. He, that thinketh he standeth, is often the Victim of too much Self-confidence. And as, in the midst of Life, we are in the possibility of meeting Death, so in the midst of trials and temptations, though wrapped in the assurance of Self-sufficiency, we are liable, and even the more likely, to fall. Let us, therefore, not repose our trust in our own good intentions alone, but strive to fortify them by the efficacy of prayer for Preservation from On HIGH! trusting that those supplications, if put forth with fervour and sincerity, will reach the Throne of Grace, and draw down from Thence All the Aid we need. And not only in adversity let us so seek Deliverance, but amidst the snares of a prosperous and, often, treacherous fortune, may we seek earnestly for Guidance and Protection, that we fall not into the snares of Satan! May we strive, habitually, to impress our minds with the uncertainty of all sublunary things; and regarding the present as the only time we can call our own, may we resolve to defer all things to the Will of GOD, and, in the faith of the Love of His SON, our SAVIOUR, may we seek for Guidance from His SPIRIT! St. Peter had before experienced the more than Mortal Efficacy of CHRIST'S Power, and the instability of his own faith, when venturing from the ship upon the Sea, On the Invitation of JESUS, he found himself Supernaturally Upheld on its surface, until the Sea, becoming troubled, his faith gave way, and but for a still more Miraculous Display of The DIVINE Energy, he would have been overwhelmed with the waves. Still was that Lesson not made Profitable to him on this occasion. Peter even did not content himself with professing, generally, his devotion to CHRIST, and his determination to acknowledge Him on all occasions and under all circumstances to be The SON of GOD, (as he had before declared Him to be,) but arrogantly assumed to himself a pre-eminence of zeal: "*Though All Men shall be offended because of Thee, yet will I never be offended.*" It is also particularly remarkable, and strongly demonstrative of the littleness of Man's boasted powers, that our SAVIOUR did not Leave Peter in suspense as to the time even when he would fall away from the faith; but Foretold, to his hearing, the time, and that so near at hand as the coming night: no plea of forgetfulness or of unguardedness from sudden and unlooked-for trial, could be urged in defence of Peter's denial of his LORD.

And so is it with us, that in every day of our Lives, and in every hour and instant of each day the Tempter, *who goeth about seeking whom he may devour*, is continually striving, by all the subtlety and allurements of pride, sensuality, or other sinful pleasures or pursuits, or by terror, or persecution, to induce us to deny The LORD, Who Made and Sustained, and The SAVIOUR, Who so Dearly Bought us. And so deep is his art and so great his power, that there is no hope of escape, neither are there any means of rescue or of refuge but in CHRIST, and by supplicating The FATHER of Mercies to Help us for His Beloved SON'S Sake in the time of need, by the Light and Guidance of His Word and HOLY SPIRIT, and Clothing us with the whole Armour of the Christian Faith. At the moment of Peter's uttering the declaration, "*Though I should die with Thee, yet will I not deny Thee!*" he, probably, would have yielded up his life willingly in his adored MASTER'S Cause, if, amidst the painful scene around him, he had been called upon calmly to do so. But with Man, his best resolutions are as a Winter's sunbeam soon, and but too often lastingly, obscured by the clouds and vapours of this terrestrial scene. In moments of pious contemplation, either in retirement or in communion with Those we love and sympathise with, we consider our faith too strong to be overcome; flattering ourselves that, for CHRIST'S Sake, we should glory in any persecutions or sufferings: but it is not always nor, perhaps, often, with many Professors of Christianity, so realized, when actually put to so sharp a test.

The narrative, according to St. Mark, is thus: *But Peter said unto Him, "Although All shall be offended, yet will not I!" And JESUS Saith unto him, "Verily, I Say unto thee, That this day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny Me thrice." But he spake the more vehemently, "If I should die with Thee, I will not deny Thee in any wise!" Likewise also said They All.*—Chap. xiv, 29 to 31. Which is in strict conformity with that of St. Matthew, excepting in the more minute statement, as to the cock crowing, that it should take place twice before the third denial; the effect of which was to leave Peter still more without excuse, since, on the first hearing the sound, the Warning should have been recalled to his memory, and placed him on his guard: he should then have had, flashing on his mind, the awfulness of the career of infidelity and ingratitude he was entering upon, if he denied and basely deserted That MASTER in the hour of His persecution, Who had Rescued him from the jaws of Death, and had Poured the Light of Immortality on his Soul.

The same Occurrence is thus, in more general terms, noticed by St. Luke: *And The LORD Said, "Simon! Simon! behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat! But I have Prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy Brethren!" And he said unto Him, "LORD, I am ready to go with Thee both into prison and to death!" And He Said, "I Tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest Me!"*—Chap. xxii, 31 to 34.

It is thus that the Efficacy of CHRIST'S Intercession is Displayed in the Final Triumph of His Servants over Satan, however for a time they may be subservient to him, and occasionally borne down by the force of temptation. For where the heart is not hardened and become reprobate, the influence of penitence will be felt on the very commission of an offence, whether against GOD, our Neighbour, or ourselves; and a hearty desire to go and sin no more succeed it. The more, however, that the heart seeks for advancement in Religion, the more determined will be the hostility and the more subtle the machinations of Satan, that Adversary of Souls, against its prevalence: and only through the Mediatorial Offices of CHRIST can Security against such potent and baneful influence be obtained. It is the aim of the Devil to sift every professing

Christian particularly as wheat, that all the chaff at least, and as much of the grain as he may withdraw from its productive character, may be his. But if GOD Permitted this, or Left us without His Sustaining and Guiding or Controuling Grace to fortify us against the fiery trial, who would be able to stand? To our endless Consolation we have the Assurance of That Word of Promise. Which never Faileth, that where sin and the temptations to sin do abound. Grace, as the Means of resisting sin, and becoming obedient unto Holiness, through the Gift of The SPIRIT, Which is by CHRIST JESUS, doth much more Abound. To That let us devoutly seek, that our rest, like St. Peter's, may be glorious, when the labours of this Life are ended, and the period of its probation closed for ever upon us; when All, who have proved faithful unto the end, shall be Called to the Blessedness of an Inheritance for ever in The KINGDOM of CHRIST.

In This Admonitory Direction of CHRIST to His Apostle, we have a Lesson read to us, as to the objects to which our attention should be unremittingly given, when, through the Influence of DIVINE Favour, our own faith is confirmed, namely, to exert ourselves to co-operate with, or rather, subserviently to the Guidance of ALMIGHTY Power and the Diffusion of DIVINE Truth, towards the conversion of Others to the faith as it is in JESUS, and their establishment in It. St. Luke, like St. Matthew, only mentions the cock's crowing, generally, but he is more minute than either of the other Evangelists, as to the exact nature of the denial, "*thou shalt deny, that thou knowest Me.*" A denial simply might mean a denial of CHRIST as The MESSIAH; but a denial of all knowledge of Him, with Whom he had been so long and intimately associated, and Who had so frequently Manifested before him Proofs of DIVINE Power and of Unequalled Goodness, and had Shewn towards himself so much Tenderness and Benevolent Attention, and had Raised him from the darkness of ignorance and Jewish prejudice, to the clear Light and Revelation of DIVINE Truth, was doubly and grievously offending; and such avowal, in the same day in which he had boldly asserted he would rather die with his MASTER than deny Him, is an instance of Human frailty and imbecility at once calculated to confound self-confidence and to weaken the conviction of the sufficiency of Self-righteousness.

The same Incident is thus taken notice of also in the Record of The Gospel by St. John: *Simon Peter said unto JESUS, "LORD, whither Goest Thou?" JESUS Answered him, "Whither I Go, thou canst not follow Me now: but thou shalt follow Me afterwards."* Peter said unto Him, "*LORD, why cannot I follow Thee now? I will lay down my life for Thy Sake!*" JESUS Answered him, "*Wilt thou lay down thy life for My Sake? Verily, Verily, I Say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied Me thrice!*"—Chap. xiii. 36 to 38.

Though somewhat differently introduced, the termination is the same; and thence is drawn the Doctrine, which is most salutary for application to ourselves. Peter pledged his allegiance, and our SAVIOUR Foretold his almost instantaneous refusal of it; and that not in an isolated instance, but in a threefold repetition within the same day. From this example of Peter, all the Evangelists concur, therefore, in conveying to their Readers and Hearers the important Truth of Man's utter inability to help himself in the great work of faith unto Salvation, without a continual appeal to and adoption of The DIVINE Aid and Guidance. And this conviction should, therefore, lead us to rest sustenance, amidst trial and temptation, on the Dispensations of DIVINE Grace, through faith in the Merits and Mediation of The SAVIOUR of Souls. And if this Truth, thus perseveringly proclaimed, be Told to us in vain, and we go on still vaunting in our own strength and in the arrogance of Self-sufficiency, then,

though in seasons of prosperity we may exclaim that we would rather die, than deny our GOD, yet will the weakness of our faith shew itself in the hour of adversity, and Satan will seduce us, and the Day of Condemnation will Overtake us; and the last Trump will Sound to our inconceivable confusion; and the Last Judgment will Come upon us; when CHRIST'S Intercession for Mercy will, consistently with DIVINE Justice, have Ceased.

Then Cometh JESUS with them unto a Place called Gethsemane, and Saith unto the Disciples, "Sit ye here, while I Go and Pray yonder!" And He Took with Him Peter and the two Sons of Zebedee; and Began to be Sorrowful and very Heavy. Then Saith He unto them, "My Soul is exceeding Sorrowful, even unto Death! Tarry ye here and watch with Me!" And He Went a little farther, and Fell on His Face, and Prayed, Saying, "O MY FATHER, if it be possible, Let this Cup pass from Me! Nevertheless, not as I Will, but as Thou Wilt."—36 to 39.

CHRIST had before Instructed His Disciples (and us through them,) in the duty of Public prayer; and had Supplied them with a concise, but comprehensive, Form of Words for that Purpose; Which has, in all succeeding Ages, been adopted by the Members of His Church. HE here Teaches by Example, as He there Taught by Precept. The Place He Chose was a Garden, the one, to which *He oft-times Resorted with His Disciples*. Thus we learn that it is in places of retirement from Worldly occupation, and in seclusion from Worldly Society, that the Soul is best fitted by prayer and meditation for any conflict it has to encounter with the World, the Flesh, and the Devil: thus is it best armed for the great fight of faith, in which, under The Great CAPTAIN of Salvation, we are Called upon to engage, and to engage valiantly unto the end; since by perseverance only can we reasonably hope to be Crowned with Victory, as Partakers in our REDEEMER'S Triumph, and as Participators in the Transcendant Glories, That Await Its Consummation, being Life without end, and Bliss without measure, Pure and Holy, and pervading our whole Soul. The Selection of a Few amongst the Disciples to witness our SAVIOUR'S Agony and Passion, was enough to communicate to the World the Character, in some degree, (for no Human conception can reach the Extremity,) of Those Sufferings, Willingly Endured for us: and the Appointment of Peter, as One of them, was, perhaps, an Instance of Peculiar Mercy towards him, that his faith should, in some measure, be Thereby strengthened; though evincing, as he afterwards did, in his Foretold declension, how weak is Man, amidst his most confident professions, unless constantly resting on DIVINE Aid, and in unceasing, however silent, prayer for Its Influence.

CHRIST was, indeed, *A Man of Sorrows, and Acquainted*, by experience, more Deeply than we can imagine, *with grief*. But now, in an Especial Manner, began That Agonizing Vexation of His SPIRIT, in Its Exposure to the hateful Powers of Darkness; when all the transgressions of His Chosen People were to press upon That SPIRIT, and the Guilt of a whole World was to be Expiated in His Atoning Sufferings and Sacrifice; Himself being, in His DIVINE Nature, of Purer Eyes than even to Behold iniquity without Displeasure. The anguish of a deeply penitent heart, for having exceedingly offended its CREATOR and BENEFactor, is not the image, but only the shadow of Such Sufferings; and the Contrast between the Exalted Bliss Experienced by CHRIST, ere He Left the Bosom of His FATHER in the Fulness of The GODHEAD, and the Pains of Hell which, it may be conjectured, had now pressed upon His Mind, even if they had not got hold of Him, must have been the Measure of His Woe. It was not the ordinary Visitation of Death to Man, that made The SON of Man thus Sorrowful, but it was a Death, the Bitterness of Which He only could Appreciate. The Righteous, in their last end, have that peace of mind, which



passeth understanding; and the more torturing are their bodily sufferings, the more do they rejoice that their Redemption draweth nigh. Death has in them no sting, the Grave over them no victory: their Souls are full of holy hope and Heavenly Consolation; having full assurance of Acceptance with GOD in CHRIST JESUS: and already are they, in imagination, with Him in Paradise. Such a death as this, is not the Death that could have overwhelmed, in its Prospective Consequences, with grief The SAVIOUR-GOD. No! His Agonies were Those of The SPIRIT, and not the Contemplated ones of the Body, the latter of which He, (as Many after His Example have done,) did Bear in Meekness and Resignation, Supplicating even Forgiveness on the infatuated Blindness that inflicted Them.

CHRIST, though invisibly, is not less, Present in SPIRIT with us, than He was with These, His Chosen Disciples; and What He Said unto them, He Virtually Says to each One of us: "Watch!" that is, use circumspection; look within and without! and let the mind and heart be placed continually on their guard against the subtle approaches of the Son of Perdition! watching and fortifying, by prayer and faith, every inlet to temptation, by which the Adversary of Souls gains access to the Human heart! And shall we hesitate, patiently, to wait The LORD'S Leisure, and His Own Chosen Season for Salvation, when, reflecting on the termination of trials and temptations assuredly arriving with the close of life to those, who live to GOD, and in reliance on His Holy SON'S Mediation, we consider that then, the Everlasting Joys of Heaven will Begin.

What a Lesson of devotional humility is here Inculcated. The SON of The HIGHEST Himself Prostrate upon the Earth, (Which He Created,) that His Creature Man might be Raised from the darkness of sin and the trammels of Satan to Heavenly Purity and Peace and Happiness! What an inconceivable Anguish of Mind must have Agitated our Blessed REDEEMER, to have wrung from Him the Expression, so utterly inconsistent with the Demands of Eternal Justice, "*Oh! My FATHER, if it be possible, Let this Cup pass from Me!*" The Prayer Bespeaks how Forcibly our SAVIOUR was Touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and how sharply Assailed He was with the Weight of Expiatory Suffering; but the Qualification, with Which It was Accompanied, Bespeaks The GOD in Man: and the Holy Resignation, Which Concludes the Prayer, "*Nevertheless, not as I Will, but as Thou Wilt!*" Confirms the Consistency of the Character Uttering It, and The MESSIAH'S Fitness for the Great Work of Reconciliation between GOD and Man.

△ The narrative as given by St. Mark is as follows: *And They came to a Place, which was named Gethsemane; and He Saith to His Disciples, "Sit ye here, while I shall Pray!" And He Taketh with Him Peter, and James and John; and Began to be Sore Amazed, and to be very Heavy; and Saith unto them, "My Soul is exceeding Sorrowful unto Death! Tarry ye here, and watch!" And He Went forward a little and Fell on the ground and Prayed That, "If it were possible, the Hour might pass from Him!" and He Said, "ABBA, FATHER, All Things are Possible unto Thee: Take away This Cup from Me! Nevertheless, not What I Will; but What Thou Wilt!"*—Chap. xiv, 32 to 36.

The agreement between the two Evangelists is so close and obvious, as to leave little room for further observation: the expression, *Sore Amazed*, is perfectly descriptive of the manifestation of the extreme of apprehension and inquietude, and assists the conception, poor as, indeed, that must be, of our SAVIOUR'S Contemplated Sufferings on our account. St. Mark prefaces the words used in the Prayer with a description of it; and though in the former the term *Cup* is the figure of the Measure of Those Sufferings, in the latter They are symbolled by a

different figure, *the Hour!* a phrase signifying That of such inconceivable Anguish, the Sufferings would neither be without an end nor without their Promised Effect. But if we embrace not with thankful hearts and with a lively faith the cup of Salvation, so Consecrated to us by the Bitter Draught Which CHRIST Drank for us to the dregs, the Hour will come upon us of Condemnation and Remorse and Woe, which, once begun, will know no end, nor witness any mitigation. The Example of our Blessed REDEEMER should Admonish us to exercise patience and resignation under The DIVINE Chastisements or Trials of our faith, and to cherish the feeling that They are Visited upon us for Good, and, if so endured, will Redound to our Glory: and that, if we suffer with or for CHRIST, we shall share in His Triumph over Sin and Death and Hell.

St. Luke's description is thus: *And JESUS Came out and Went, as He was Wont, to the Mount of Olives; and His Disciples also followed Him: and, when He was at the place, He Said unto them, "Pray that ye enter not into temptation!" And He was Withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and Kneeled down and Prayed, Saying, "FATHER, if Thou be Willing, Remove This Cup from Me! Nevertheless, not My Will, but Thine be Done!" And there appeared an Angel unto Him from Heaven, strengthening Him: and, being in an Agony, He Prayed more Earnestly: and His Sweat was, as it were, great drops of Blood falling down to the ground.*—Chap. xxii, 39 to 44.

Thus is a deeper colouring given to the appalling Picture of our SAVIOUR'S Suffering, by an enlarged description of Its Effects upon the Natural Body of The Incarnate DEITY, Which was so Worked upon by the Inward and Invisible Emotions of His SPIRIT, as to Melt, as it were, through Agitation, Exuding in sweat, large and ponderous as drops of blood, and, perhaps, commingling with it: than which it is not in Nature to exhibit a more acute sense of feeling; for in Man, stupefaction or insensibility is often Mercifully Made the barrier against the influence of Suffering beyond endurance in this life. Amidst so much of Apprehension of the Extreme of Suffering, this Evangelist presents to us an interesting Instance of the Providential Care and Unceasing Goodness of GOD: for the Angel of Consolation was Missioned to that Office; and, as on Occasion of the Temptation, Appointed to Minister unto Him in the hour of Anticipated Agony and Death, when the last efforts of the wicked One were, with increased subtlety, exerted to drown Man in endless perdition, by striving for the Mastery of the Flesh over the Spirit. But effectual, as on all other occasions, have been the visits of such Celestial Messengers in the administration, not only of help but of comfort, in this instance it seems that all, but assistance towards strengthening the Faith or Resolution of the Man CHRIST JESUS, was Denied, since His Agonizing Feelings remained with Him, and Led to an Increased Fervency in His Supplication. And thus, though from Heaven unto us is Sent, through the Mediation of CHRIST, the Revivifying Graces of The HOLY SPIRIT Itself, yet does it behove us to seek, by earnest and frequent prayer, the employment of Them, to our Soul's Salvation, against all the fiery darts of the Devil, and against all the assailing temptations and trials from without, and all the debasing and corrupting passions from within: and then, whatever may be our portion of suffering or privation in this Life, which hath an end, and a fast-approaching and ever-advancing one, to the longest Liver amongst us, there will be Reserved for us in the Life to Come, which has no end, a State of Perfect Joy in the Abodes of Holiness and Heavenly Peace. Unto Such, however, as use despite to The SPIRIT of Grace, and reject the Conditions of The Gospel Covenant Which CHRIST Sealed for us with His Blood, the Agony, thus Exhibited by CHRIST Himself, in This His Hour of Conflict with the Powers of Darkness, may Form an image, though a

faint one, of the torment in reserve for the Faithless and the Reprobate, and in which the Devil and his Angels will participate, but without any alleviation being derivable from such communion, and still less from any consciousness of not being deservedly exposed to it.

△ St. John mentions the Circumstance of our SAVIOUR'S Going to the Garden of Gethsemane, but does not offer any description of the Passion: his account is concise, and is as follows: *When JESUS had Spoken, He Went forth with His Disciples over the Brook Cedron, where was a Garden, into the which He Entered, and His Disciples: and Judas also, which betrayed Him, knew the Place; for JESUS oft-times Resorted thither with His Disciples.*—Chap. xviii, 1, 2. This Evangelist has, however, recorded a Prayer of our SAVIOUR, so Similar to That Used by Him on this Occasion, and Accompanied with Such an Expression of Sorrow, that it is probable It has reference to the Same Event; and that the order of time has only not been precisely observed by this Gospel Historian. After the description of our SAVIOUR Riding in Triumph into Jerusalem, and being sought after by Some of the Gentile Converts, the Apostle has the following narrative of His LORD'S Address, with reference to His Approaching Sufferings and Dissolution, and in Which the Necessity and Arduousness as well as the Nature and Result of the Trial Which He Knew, Prophetically, He was shortly to Undergo, are Portrayed: *And JESUS Answered, Saying, "The Hour is Come, that The SON of Man should be Glorified: Verily, Verily, I Say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit: he, that loveth his life, shall lose it; and he, that hateth his life in this World, shall keep it unto Life Eternal. If any Man serve Me, let him follow Me! And Where I am, There shall also My Servant be. If any Man serve Me, him will My FATHER Honour. Now is My Soul Troubled, and What shall I Say? FATHER, Save Me from This Hour! But for This Cause Came I unto This Hour. FATHER, Glorify Thy Name!" Then Came there A VOICE from Heaven, Saying, "I have both Glorified It, and will Glorify It again!" The People therefore, that stood by, and heard It, said, "That it Thundered!" Others said, "An Angel spake to Him!" JESUS Answered, and Said, "This VOICE Came, not because of Me, but for your sakes. Now is the Judgment of this World; now shall The PRINCE of this World be cast out: and I, if I be Lifted up from the Earth, will Draw all Men unto Me." This (the Apostle adds,) He Said, Signifying what death He should Die.*—John xii, 23 to 33. The whole of this has, evidently, relation to the Same Great Event, the Victory of CHRIST over sin and Death, by the Death of Himself, amidst persecution and torment, to Attain That Victory; and the Object Gained by It, the Redemption and Glorification of His Favourite Creature, Man. CHRIST Knew that the Hour was near when His Final Triumph would be Accomplished. But to Arrive at That Goal He had to Pass through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and, indeed, to Experience its realities; and the Measure of His Sufferings there He Knew would be so Deep, that His Soul might well be exceedingly Agitated by the Contemplation of Them; though the Fruit They would Yield, He Foreknew would Prove so exultingly Glorious. To Give Efficacy to His Mediation, His Bodily Death by Crucifixion, and His Spiritual State of Torture, infinitely and incalculably more Agonizing, were necessary; and though the Expression of an Unqualified Wish would have Saved Him from Such Torment, yet would He then have Failed to have been The Promised SAVIOUR of Mankind. *"For This Cause, therefore, (said CHRIST,) Came I unto This Hour!"* And the force of the Expression, used by the other Evangelists, *"Not My Will, but Thine be Done,"* is Embodied in These Words, *"FATHER, Glorify Thy Name!"* implying, "Let the Great

Work of Man's Redemption Go forward to its Fullest Accomplishment, without Regard to My Sufferings; and Let the Cause of DIVINE Mercy towards Man Prosper to the Eternal Honour of his CREATOR!" The VOICE from Heaven, Which Answered to This Gracious Ejaculation of our SAVIOUR'S Determined Resignation to The DIVINE Will, is Declared by St. John to be That of The GODHEAD Itself; though by Some, as by St. Luke, or those that related the Occurrence to him, it was believed to be that of an Angel. And our SAVIOUR here Disavows the necessity even of that for the support of Himself in the approaching Conflict with all the Powers of Darkness and of Evil and the great Adversary of Souls at their head, Declaring the sole Object of ~~It~~ to be the strengthening, in the true faith, the Disciples and Followers around Him, who were the Chosen Witnesses of the Anguish He was then Enduring. And thus unspeakably Great as were our Blessed REDEEMER'S Sufferings then and afterwards on our account, as well as theirs, what manner of People ought we to be? Unquestionably in all holy conversation and godliness in thought, as in deed, and in work as in word, seeing that Thereby the Judgment on this World is virtually present, and that if we neglect the so Great and Gracious Salvation, by treading under foot The SON of Man, and rejecting the Covenant of Mercy, and doing despite to The HOLY GHOST, there remaineth no more Offering for sin, nor any other Means whereby we can inherit Eternal Glory.

CHRIST was Lifted up, not only unto death by being Suspended on the Cross, but, after death, by His Resurrection unto Glory. And though the Apostle confines this conditional Prophecy of our SAVIOUR to the former, yet may we extend Its Application to the latter also, for the further Consolation of our Souls, as confirmatory of That Gracious Declaration, that He will Draw all Men (who will not resist His Benevolent Design,) unto Him; that Where He is, in the Perfection of Peace and Holy Joy, we may be also.

The Apostles Chosen by our SAVIOUR to be the Companions of His Retirement and the Witnesses of His Passion on this Occasion, were Three of the Four, who were first Called by Him to the Apostleship according to Chapter iv, 18 to 21, and happily for them, they were not disobedient to the Call: and as our SAVIOUR was Lifted up finally from the Earth, they, doubtless, after having finished their course, were Drawn up to Him, and are now amongst the glorious Twelve Appointed to Judge the twelve Tribes of Israel.

To This State of Suffering and pious Resignation of our Blessed REDEEMER, the Inspired Writer to the Hebrews bears incidental testimony, where, reasoning with the Jews, he expounded unto them *CHRIST, as The PRIEST for Ever after the Order of Melchizedec*, in these words, *Who in the days of His Flesh, when He had Offered up Prayers and Supplications, with strong Crying and Tears, unto Him, That was Able to Save Him from death, and was Heard, in That He Feared; though He were A SON, yet Learned He Obedience by the Things Which He Suffered; and, being Made Perfect, (by Suffering,) He Became The AUTHOR of Eternal Salvation unto all them, that obey Him.*—Heb. v, 7 to 9.

Such was the Obedience of CHRIST, as Man, for Man's sake; and such, for his own sake, should be Man's obedience to the Glory of GOD, and in grateful remembrance of his REDEEMER'S Cross and Passion: *Let this mind be in us Which was also in CHRIST JESUS! Who being in the Form of GOD, Thought it not robbery to be Equal with GOD, but Made Himself of no reputation, and Took upon Him the form of a Servant, and was Made in the likeness of Men; and being Found in fashion as a Man, He Humbled Himself and Became Obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross.*—Phil. ii, 5 to 8.

It is by the adoption of the spirit of Such obedience that we shall find peace

at the last, by having crucified the flesh with its inordinate affections and lusts, such as war against the Soul, and by offering up ourselves, both in Soul and Body, a lively sacrifice, such as in the Gracious Condescension of GOD may be Acceptable unto Him, through CHRIST JESUS, our LORD; being also in all things observant of His Laws, and willing Ministers of the Dictates and Suggestions of His HOLY SPIRIT. Whatever cup of affliction, as a Spiritual trial of our faith in JESUS, may be presented to us, let us not, in the wantonness of free agency, reject it, but say, as did our REDEEMER unto His FATHER and our FATHER, and unto His GOD and our GOD, "*Not as I will, but as Thou Wilt!*" CHRIST had before Declared to His Disciples, that *they should drink of His Cup*: [Chap. xx, 23.] and the Declaration, in effect, equally Applies to us as professing Members of His Church militant upon Earth. Indeed, if we follow the advice of One of His Distinguished Disciples and Apostles we should *count it all joy, when we fall into trials and temptations, assured that such trying of our faith worketh Christian patience and resignation*; remembering, nevertheless, and adopting the Apostle's further admonition, *that patience should have its perfect work, that we may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing to the efficacy and fruitfulness of our faith* [James i, 2 to 4]. The truest wisdom in Man is the most implicit obedience to the Will of GOD, as Revealed in His Word, or Imparted by His SPIRIT: CHRIST Himself Said, "*I can of Mine Own Self Do nothing: as I Hear, I Judge; and My Judgment is Just, because I Seek not Mine Own Will, but the Will of The FATHER, Which Sent Me:*" [John v, 30.] and again, "*I Came down from Heaven, not to Do Mine Own Will, but the Will of Him That Sent Me:*" and then He Goes on to Declare, to our great and endless comfort, What That Will was, as Respected Himself; and thence we should strive, practically, to entertain no other will but GOD'S: "*This is The FATHER'S Will, Which hath Sent Me, 'That of All, Which He hath Given Me, I should Lose nothing; but should Raise it up again at the Last Day.'* And *This is the Will of Him That Sent Me, 'That every One, which seeth The SON, and believeth on Him, may have Everlasting Life.'* And *I will Raise him up at the Last Day.*"—John vi, 38 to 40.

Let us pray, therefore, with the spirit, and let us pray with the understanding also, that our resignation to The DIVINE Will may be perfected in the fulness of faith in and after the Example of That PATTERN of all Excellence, The Incarnate SAVIOUR of Souls, The SON of THE MOST HIGH.

△ And He Cometh unto the Disciples, and Findeth them asleep, and Saith unto Peter, "What! could ye not watch with Me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation! the Spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak!" HE Went away again the second time, and Prayed, Saying, "O My FATHER, if This Cup may not pass away from Me, except I Drink It, Thy Will be Done!" And He Came, and Found them asleep again; for their eyes were heavy. And He Left them and Went away again, and Prayed the third time, Saying the Same Words.—40 to 44.

The Injunction of our SAVIOUR to the Disciples, whom He had so distinguishingly Honoured by a Selection of them from the Twelve, was to "*tarry and watch!*" and yet, on His Returning, after having Withdrawn Himself, but not out of the reach of their observation, whilst He visibly Underwent an Agony, That Baffles, not only all description, but even the utmost range of Human conception, He Found those Disciples sleeping! though for them and their Salvation, equally as for That of any Other Members of all the Families of Human Kind, from Adam down to his latest Posterity, were Those Sufferings Endured. And What our Merciful REDEEMER thus Said to His Chosen Followers, doth He not in Spirit constantly Say, in a Tone of equally Benevolent Remonstrance, "*What! can ye not watch with Me? Watch and pray, lest ye enter into tempta-*

n." And did He not Endure all These His Sufferings, that All might, in like manner, be Saved; if they would not neglect His Appointed Means of Salvation? And although true it is that our Gracious CREATOR is Long-Suffering unto every One, as well as Plenteous in Goodness and Truth, and ever Willing to forgive the Penitent Heart, yet let us not be induced to trifle with His Forbearance, to Which His Justice must Set some limit; but whilst we have time, even now whilst it is called "to-day," let us watch with fidelity, and pray with sincerity and in the faith of CHRIST'S Mediation, that we may be His at His coming!

The narrative, as given by St. Mark, is thus: *And JESUS Cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, "Simon, sleepest thou? couldst thou not watch one hour? Watch ye, and pray! lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak!"*—Chap. xiv, 37, 38. From the same principle of benevolence, the holy Apostle Paul concludes his exhortation to put on the whole Armour of GOD, with this admonition: *Pray always with all prayer and supplication in The SPIRIT; and watch thereunto with all perseverance!*—Eph. vi, 18. And the same Apostle furnishes a most masterly description of the contending elements in Man's nature, and the opposite influences by which he is actuated, so forcibly illustrative of the Saying of The blessed REDEEMER contained in the Text: "*The Spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. We know (says the Apostle,) that the Law is Spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin: for that, which I do, I allow not: for what I would, that do not; but what I hate, that do I: if then I do that, which I would not, I consent to the Law that it is good: now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me: for I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that, which is good, I find not: for the good, that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that do: now, if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin, that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me; for delight in the Law of GOD after the inward Man; but I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members.* The Apostle then breaks forth into an expression of fearful apprehension at the contemplation of his condition, but which he answers to his own and to our unspeakable consolation through faith

CHRIST, as The SON of The MOST HIGH: *O wretched Man, that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank GOD, through JESUS CHRIST, our LORD!* So then with the mind I myself serve the Law of GOD; but with the flesh the law of sin: there is therefore, now no Condemnation to them, which are in CHRIST JESUS, who walk not after the flesh, but after The SPIRIT: for the Law of The SPIRIT of Life in CHRIST JESUS hath Made us Free from the law of sin and death: for what the Law could not do, in that it is weak through the flesh, GOD, Sending His Own SON in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, Condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who walk, not after the flesh, but after The SPIRIT: For they, that are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh; but they, that are after The SPIRIT, the Things of The SPIRIT: for to be carnally-minded is death, but to be Spiritually-minded is Life and Peace.—Rom. vii, 14 to 25; i, 1 to 6.

Temptation every where and at all times in this life surrounds us, and assails us from within, as well as from without; and most especially through the inordinate impulses of the mind, and the sensual and base propensities of the heart. Against its influence, in all its varied attractions or excitements, it moves us to be ever on the watch; and, thanks be to GOD, Who hath Given

unto us the Means of Protection and Salvation, and of Victory, through our LORD JESUS CHRIST, in the Grace of The HOLY GHOST, Who is Ever Ready to Go before and to Follow us, and to Work within us to will and to do that, which may enable us so effectually to resist the Devil, that he may flee from us.

What CHRIST thus so Forcibly Impressed on the mind of St. Peter, that Apostle, in lively imitation of his LORD and MASTER, thus earnestly inculcated on his Converts: saying, *Be ye sober, and watch unto prayer!* and he prefaced the exhortation with this reasoning, so important and awful in its character, *for the End of all Things is at hand.*—1 Peter iv, 7.

△ St. Luke's description is thus: *And when JESUS Rose up from Prayer, and was Come to His Disciples, He found them sleeping for sorrow, and Said unto them, "Why sleep ye? Rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation!"*—Chap. xxii, 45, 46.

Sorrow here described as the cause of the Disciples' drowsiness, may have meant only weariness and heaviness; as The SAVIOUR would hardly have Chided them for the effect of a grief forced upon them by an observance of His Sufferings.

The Repetition of the Same Prayer, and the Same Avowal of Entire Resignation to the Will of GOD, are thus noticed also by St. Mark: *And again JESUS Went away, and Prayed, and Spake the Same Words; and when He Returned He Found the Disciples asleep again; for their eyes were heavy; neither wist they what to answer Him.*—Chap. xiv, 39, 40. But St. Luke takes no notice of this circumstance.

Thus have we exemplified to us the efficacy of the shortest ejaculatory prayers, when flowing from the heart; and such prayers as these should be in our thoughts and adoption repeatedly in the course of every day of our Lives; even about our walks and about our ordinary occupations, as in the retirement of our chambers or in our midnight musings, repeating "*Heavenly FATHER, not as I will, but as Thou Wilt!*" Thus will the mind be fortified against every temporal adversity, and formed to meet, with patience and resignation, even the most apparently afflictive Dispensation of An All-Wise, Almighty, All-Discerning PROVIDENCE. And whether sleeping or waking, with a spirit so meek and passive, if The LORD Find us, when He Cometh to us, we have the most comforting Assurance that we shall be Called to the Glories of a Heavenly Inheritance in our REDEEMER'S KINGDOM. But alas! How often, and unto how Many of us doth the Word of The LORD Address to us, Admonishingly, this Prayer, but it is not heeded; and how often doth The SPIRIT of The LORD Say, with all the Benevolence of DIVINE Compassion, "*Awake, why sleepest thou, and arise from the Dead, that CHRIST may Give you Light!*" and again, "*Awake to Righteousness, and sin not!*" since many, who outwardly hear, do not inwardly apply their hearts to such Wisdom, but, through Self-willedness, reject the Eternal for an imaginary but deceitful temporary good.

To the truly pious Man the contemplation of death, so far from sinking his Soul in apprehension and anguish, administers the purest Earthly bliss in the cherished hope of a State of Happiness, past all conception, hereafter: the first intimation of its approach he welcomes as the harbinger of his transit from a World of trouble, anxiety, and disappointment, to a Land of Peace and Pure and Perfect Joy, in union with Saints and Angels under The MESSIAH'S Sovereign Rule.

As CHRIST, in the Height of His Agony, Thrice Prayed "*That His Cup might pass from Him, if His Heavenly FATHER so Willed it,*" we have the most forcible ground for believing that More than Bodily Suffering and Death

were Mingled in it. And shall we, notwithstanding This Exemplary Submission of The SON of GOD for our sakes, refuse to resign ourselves unto the entire Direction and Disposal of The GOD of Mercy and Loving Kindness? or did CHRIST Suffer less for our sins, than for the sins of Those, who were temporaries with Him in His Sojourn upon Earth? or are our Souls, Immortal as they undoubtedly are, of less value to ourselves, or in a less degree Objects of DIVINE Contemplation and Compassion? If we neglect to watch and pray in the Spirit, as the Example of CHRIST hath Warned us to do, the inevitable consequence of such Self-destroying folly will be, after a life so heedless and unhallowed, to meet death without peace and without hope, and a resurrection to judgment without Mercy, and Which will Condemn us to have our portion with the Wicked, and to drink to the dregs the cup of endless anguish and remorse, which is the vinegar of Self-accusation mingled with the gall of Satanic persecution; and then, when ready and eager to watch till our eyes gushed out, and to pray till our knee-bones were made bare, there will no fitting time be found for the Ear of DIVINE Mercy, since Its Avenues will be Closed to us forever: for the Seal of DIVINE Truth has been Put to that Assertion. It is the heaviness of the heart in Spiritual labours that may be considered as thus figuratively represented under the image of the Disciples' heaviness to sleep; and against such heaviness it is, that it behoves us, by vigilance and supplication, continually to guard, seeking, with earnestness, The HOLY SPIRIT'S only Effectual but Graciously Proffered Aid to Sustain us therein.

120 Cometh He to His Disciples, and Saith unto them, "Sleep on now, and take your rest! Behold, the hour is at hand, and The SON of Man is Betrayed into the hands of Sinners! Rise, let us be going! behold, he is at hand that doth betray Me!"—45, 46.

The Fruit of This Prayer of our SAVIOUR seems to have been an entire confidence in the Victory That Awaited Him in the Conflict, Which He was then Fully Resolved to Encounter; and, with Those Feelings, He Approached His Disciples; Knowing, that though in their own flesh and their own Spirit they were weak, yet, by Putting on the fulness of faith in Him, and clothing themselves in His Righteousness, they would become strong; having the Grace The HOLY SPIRIT Imparted to them as the First Fruits of That Sacrificial Offering He was about to Make of Himself for their Atonement and Reconciliation to DIVINE Favour. It was, therefore, that He Said to His Disciples, *Sleep on now, and take your rest!*" For He had Undertaken to Procure That rest for their Souls, by Enduring to the end the Contest with Satan, and allowing up Death in His Victory over Sin and all the Powers of Darkness and of evil. On another Occasion our SAVIOUR had Said, "*In the World ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer, I have Overcome the World!*" And this Same Victory Extended also over the Flesh and the Devil, and Which He here Contemplated would Insure His Disciples, both of that hour and of all Time, the prospect and final possession of That Heavenly Canaan, Where their Souls would be at Peace, and they would rest from their labours.

And was the hour of the Power of Darkness, when The SON of GOD was to be Delivered over, Bound as a Sacrifice to the Altar, and Slain by the Spirit of Evil, the hour when His Followers were Invited by Him, to sleep on, and take their rest; since He had Undertaken to Bear the burden of their sins, and be Bruised for their iniquities? What Tenderness and Compassionate loving-Kindness does This, our SAVIOUR'S Intercessory Office, Bespeak! the like Sleep, and to an equally Eternal Rest are we, by The Same Gracious DEEMER, Mercifully Called; for They are Both Purchased for us by The



Same Costly Price, the Same Interposing Merits: and on our acceptance or rejection of Them, in the vital spirit of Christian faith, or its neglect, will depend whether, in the Life to Come, we enter, with CHRIST, into His Rest of Exhaustless and Unspeakable Joy, or share, with the Devil and his Angels, the cup of endless perdition and unalleviated woe. That the Sleep and the Rest, to which the Disciples were Called by their LORD and MASTER, had a figurative and Spiritual sense, and were Used with reference to that Condition in the Life to Come, is inferable from the Passage, that so immediately succeeds, where our SAVIOUR Declared to them the rapid approach of His Adversaries; and Roused them from their bodily slumbers, that they might be on their guard.

The narrative of St. Mark is thus: *And JESUS Cometh the third time, and Saith unto the Disciples, "Sleep on now, and take your rest! it is enough, the hour is come; behold, The SON of Man is Betrayed into the hands of Sinners! Rise up, let us go! lo, he, that betrayeth Me, is at hand."*—Chap. xiv, 41, 42.

The words, "*It is enough*," here used by this Evangelist, seem to speak forcibly in confirmation of the construction before offered of the preceding Text. Indicating that the Resolution, definitively Formed by our SAVIOUR, to Offer Himself up for the sins of the whole World, would Insure to His faithful Followers a final Entry into the Sainted Rest of Heaven. "*It is Enough, the hour is come!*" All that is now necessary for your Eternal Salvation is Irrevocably Decided on; and unto you and unto All, who will be faithful unto the end, the Gates of Heaven shall be Opened; and neither treachery nor evil of any kind shall be therein: the malice of Satan and of his willing Votaries amongst Mankind shall be borne by Me. But still, though the Assurance of Peace and of Joy in the Life to Come may be ours, in the Life that is we must expect tribulation, and should unceasingly watch and pray that we may be Rescued from the temptations or persecutions that may beset us, lest we fall a prey to the Enemy of our Souls' peace.

The Words of our SAVIOUR, as recorded by His Favourite Disciple, and who was present on the occasion, still further Illustrates their Intent: "*Sleep on now, and take your rest! Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in GOD, believe also in Me! In My FATHER'S House are Many Mansions; if it were not so, I would have Told you; I Go to Prepare a Place for you: and, if I Go and Prepare a Place for you, I will Come again, and Receive you unto Myself; that, Where I am, There ye may be also.*"—John xiv, 1 to 3. And again, "*Peace I Leave with you! My Peace I Give unto you! not as the World giveth, Give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid!*"—27.

With Such Assurances from Him, Who is the Truth, the Way, and the Life, and Whose Word never Faileth, the Soul may, indeed, sleep in safety, and take its rest in confidence, knowing that its Salvation cannot be far off; that even the Angels of The MOST HIGH watch over it, and that The SON of The MOST HIGH hath Paid the Ransoming Price for It.

△ And while He yet Spake, lo, Judas, One of the Twelve, came, and with him, a great Multitude, with swords and staves, from the chief Priests and Elders of the People. Now he, that betrayed Him, gave them a sign, saying, "Whomsoever I shall kiss, That Same is He: hold Him fast!" And forthwith he came to JESUS, and said, "Hail, MASTER!" and kissed Him. And JESUS Said unto him, "Friend! wherefore art thou come?" Then came they and laid hands on JESUS, and took Him.—47 to 50.

The Meek and Patient JESUS, Who was Himself The PRINCE of Peace, and Whose Gospel was the Tidings of Peace and of Good Will towards all the World, as well as the Manifestation of Glory to GOD in the Highest, Who Himself Broke not the bruised reed, nor Quenched the smoking flax, was thus

Made the Prey of Popular misconception and fury, instigated and excited and directed by the Enemy of true holiness and righteousness, Spiritual Pride in high places; the Promoters, through jealousy and envy, of detraction and destruction; the forward though, perhaps, unconscious Voluntaries of Satan, because effecting his subtle purpose, though imagining they only promoted their own, and deceiving themselves by justifying their spirit of persecution, as called for in reverence to the Honour of GOD. To what an awful depth of iniquity will the yielding to the suggestions of Satan sink the Soul! Who could have had better opportunity of discerning between good and evil, and of weighing justly the relative value of Time, and the things of Time, with Eternity, and the exhaustless Treasures that await Therein the Sainted Soul, than Judas? and yet how did one base passion blind his mind, and urge him on to a work that brought distraction to himself, and took from him all peace in Time and all hope of It in Eternity. To gain the hateful end of covetousness, hypocrisy is resorted to, and his Heavenly MASTER is approached by that symbol of fondest affection, a kiss; but foreknowing that it would be followed by a sword, and such a sword as should pierce through his Gracious MASTER'S Soul, to the very dividing asunder of Body and Spirit. With such a salutation was The MESSEIAH Surrendered to His Murderers: and how often is it that by the blandishments of Vice and the surfaced attractions of sensual Pleasure, and by the allurements of wealth or Ambition, are the Souls of unregenerated Human Kind led on through the subtlety and artifices of Satan, to their interminable destruction, having put from them the Only GUIDE That could have Brought to them Salvation.

The appellation of "*Friend*" to the apostate Judas, though lately Honoured with the Companionship of The SON of GOD, seems, at the first view, inapplicable, and cannot, indeed, be otherwise understood than as a common and familiar term of address; for our SAVIOUR not only Knew that Judas was to betray Him, and even the sign, which was to precede His Surrender to the Powers of Darkness, (and indeed had so recently Predicted it,) but had all the Awful Consequences Prophetically before Him, and, amongst Them, the Self-destroying career of the Traitor, and his endless destiny to misery and remorse.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And immediately while He yet Spake, cometh Judas, One of the Twelve, and with him a great Multitude, with swords and staves, from the Chief Priests and the Scribes and the Elders; and he, that betrayed Him, had given them a token, saying, "Whomsoever I shall kiss, That Same is He: take Him, and lead Him away safely!" And as soon as he was come, he goeth straightway to Him, and saith, "MASTER! MASTER!" and kissed Him. And they laid their hands on Him, and took Him.*—Chap. xiv, 43 to 46.

In all the material features of this part of the Gospel History, there thus appears a close accordance; but St. Mark, though he noticed Judas's address to our SAVIOUR, does not record the Reply.

St. Luke's description is as follows: *And while JESUS yet Spake, behold, a Multitude, and he, that was called Judas, One of the Twelve, went before them, and drew near unto JESUS to kiss Him. But JESUS Said unto him, "Judas! betrayest thou The SON of Man with a kiss?"*—Chap. xxii, 47, 48.

The variance, even here, is rather in words than in substance; and this Evangelist, having written from the report of Others, not unnaturally was led to blend the Prophecy and the fact in this manner together. The description given by the remaining Evangelist not only confirms it, but fills up the deficiency, which he probably found in the Others: *Judas then having received a Band of Men and Officers from the chief Priest and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons. JESUS, therefore, Knowing all Things that should*

come upon Him, Went forth and Said unto them, "Whom seek ye?" They answered Him, "JESUS of Nazareth!" JESUS Saith unto them, "I am He!" And Judas also, which betrayed Him, stood with them. As soon then as He had Said unto them, "I am He!" they went backward, and fell to the ground. Then Asked He them again, "Whom seek ye?" And they said, "JESUS of Nazareth!" JESUS Answered, "I have Told you that I am He: if, therefore, ye seek Me, let These go their way! That the Saying might be Fulfilled Which He Spake (Chap. xvii, 12), 'Of them, which Thou Gavest Me, have I Lost None.'"—John xviii, 3 to 9.

The time being the night, and the night so dark as to need torches and lanterns, and the Band sent out to apprehend CHRIST being large, it is probable that they were spread wide and surrounded both Him and All that were with Him: and the Military, struck by the Dignity and Fortitude and Solemnity of His Manner, were, at the instant, influenced by their common feeling of It, to pay Him homage; and, but for the arrival of Judas and the Priests and Scribes, who excited and directed them to a different behaviour, might have persevered in it. Such was not unnaturally the awe, which the rumoured Miracles, That CHRIST had Wrought, and the Purity and Sublimity of His Conduct and Conversation were likely to Inspire, where Spiritual pride and jealousy and hypocrisy had no place in the breast; though they felt bound, in observance of military discipline, to execute the commands given them. And Judas was there, who had been represented to them as the former Companion of JESUS, and admitted to the Secrets of His Council, and as being prepared to give evidence to His Condemnation.

The testimony of all four Evangelists to the most material part of this Occurrence in our SAVIOUR'S Life, namely, the apostacy and treachery of One of His Chosen Disciples, and the confirmation of Prophecy Thereby, is corroborated by that of St. Peter, who, after the Ascension of CHRIST, addressing the Rest of the Apostles and Assembly of about *one hundred and twenty* of the early Christians, preparatory to the election of a Successor to Judas Iscariot, said, *Men and Brethren, This Scripture must needs have been Fulfilled, Which The HOLY GHOST, by the mouth of David, Spake before, (Let his habitation be desolate, and let no Man dwell therein; and his Bishoprick let Another take! Ps. lxi, 25; cix, 8.) concerning Judas, which was Guide to them, that took JESUS: for he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this Ministry.—Acts i, 15 to 17. 20.*

△ And, behold, One of them, which were with JESUS, stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a Servant of the High Priest, and smote off his ear. Then Said JESUS unto him, "Put up again thy sword into his place! for all they, that take the sword, shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now Pray to My FATHER, and He shall presently Give Me More than Twelve Legions of Angels? But how then shall the Scriptures be Fulfilled, that Thus it must be?"—51 to 54.

Thus, even in the Presence of acknowledged DEITY, and enlisted in His Cause, is Man, when yielding to the guidance of his own weak reason, liable to be the instrument of Satan, by giving vent to those impulses of feeling or affection, which are not of The SPIRIT, but of the Natural Man, and which take from the Soul its dependance on the Doctrine and Discipline, which the Word of GOD Inculcates; disturbing the harmony and resignation that should uniformly prevail within it, and which would do so, were the whole heart and mind and Soul surrendered implicitly to The DIVINE Will. The KINGDOM of CHRIST is not of this World, neither can the pride or passions, to which

Man, in his unsanctified state, too readily yields, find places Therein: consequently it should be the study and aim of our thoughts to expel them from us, that they do not break forth in our intercourse with the World, and mar our Christian Character or Profession. As the Disciple, who drew a sword in his beloved MASTER'S defence, was Rebuked for the act, we may hence draw a conclusion that, in the progress of our Christian course, we are to lay aside all wrath and violence and vindictive feeling, and in the great fight of Faith, use only the Sword of The SPIRIT, even the Word of GOD, after the Example and in observance of the Express Direction of The Great CAPTAIN of our Salvation. Fight, indeed, we may, and are bound to do, with the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, but not as the Votaries of Ambition and Worldly-glory fight, to devour as well to destroy, but with meekness and lowliness, and with faith unfeigned, and by perseverance in holiness, that we may overcome evil with good, and thereby obtain that Crown of Glory, Which fadeth not away, but is Eternal in the Heavens.

The true Disciple of CHRIST knows not how, willingly, to use a sword against a Fellow, but under the most imperious sense of duty as in his Nation's righteous cause; and would rather have one pierce through his own Soul to the dividing asunder of Body and Spirit, than he would direct it to the destruction of a Fellow-Creature. He is himself, at times, even desirous of death, when the fulness of faith, in the assurance of Redemption, is upon him, that he may be brought to the footstool of his SAVIOUR'S Throne, and both behold His Glory, and share His Exhaustless Love; he does not presumptuously rush on death, but welcomes its arrival in any form, in which it may present itself, as the Appointment of Him, with Whom are the Issues of Life and Death. So far from wantonly sacrificing Another's life even in Self-defence, he would, if Permitted by The DIVINE Law, lay down his life for Another's Salvation. And often Those are found, who prematurely spend their Lives by labours in their Heavenly MASTER'S Cause for the Salvation of Other's Souls.

All Power belongeth unto GOD; and What The FATHER Hath, That Freely Committeth He unto The SON. Shall He, Who, with One Utterance of His Will, Created all Things, be Unable to Resolve all Things into their first Principles or into total Annihilation, as may be His Preference? Shall He, Who Ruleth over all the Armies of Heaven, and, in the beautiful language of Scripture Figure, "*Who hath His Way in the whirlwind and in the storm, the clouds being the dust of His Feet,*" be assailed by a petty Band of one only Nation in the Globe, nay, even from one City only of that Nation, and be without Power, if He had but the Determination, to Defend and Protect Himself, and to Pour instant Destruction upon every Soul of the blaspheming Crew? But CHRIST Came not to Destroy, but to Save! He Came to Offer Himself up a Ransom for Sinners, that GOD might, in Him, be Reconciled even to a World so rebellious and obnoxious; and that the Door of Mercy might be Reopened unto All of Mankind, who would humbly and earnestly and gratefully strive to enter in thereat: He, Whose Promise never faileth, had Said, and should He not Do it? that He would *be Led as a Lamb to the slaughter, and as a Sheep before her Shearers is dumb, so would not He Open His Mouth; that He might Bear our iniquities and be Wounded for our transgressions, and that the Chastisement of our peace might be upon Him.* Thus it became Him to Submit, that the Scriptures, Which were the Dictates of His SPIRIT, should be Fulfilled.

The description, as given of This by St. Mark, is thus: *And One of them, that stood by, drew a sword and smote a Servant of the high Priest, and cut off his ear.*—Chap. xiv, 47. But by this Evangelist this incident is unaccompanied by the detail of the interesting Observations Made by our Blessed SAVIOUR, The PRINCE of Peace, upon it.

St. Luke has the same omission, but in one respect he improves even upon St. Matthew's account: *When They, which were about JESUS, saw what would follow (on the approach of the Multitude), they said unto Him, "LORD, shall we smite with the sword?" And One of them smote the Servant of the high Priest, and cut off his right ear. And JESUS Answered, and Said, "Suffer ye thus far!" And He Touched his ear and Healed him.*—Chap. xxii, 49 to 51.

Thus it appears, that amidst the perils which surrounded Him, and the insult and violence that were offered Him, The Glorious SON of The MOST HIGH, yet Gave His first Attention to, and Looked with Pity on, the slight corporal suffering of One of His, probably, most prominent Enemies, nor did He only Look towards it, but Advanced to Give Immediate and Effectual Relief by a Miraculous Exercise of His Power, Thereby Furnishing Another Proof of the Transcendancy of His Goodness and the Divinity of His NATURE. In a previous part of this Evangelist's narrative, it is recorded that, on our SAVIOUR'S Predicting the Persecutions that were to arise, primarily against Himself, and secondarily against His Disciples, and on their saying unto Him, "*LORD, behold, here are two swords!*" He Said unto them, "*It is enough!*"—Luke xxii, 38. In thus Saying, "*It is enough!*" CHRIST Looked forward, in the Power of The SPIRIT, (with Whom to-morrow and yesterday are as to-day, All Known or Foreknown,) to the Event that should happen, when the mistaken zeal of His Disciple would give Him the opportunity of Manifesting before His Adversaries, even in their hostile array, the Excellency of His Greatness and the Force of His Love, by Himself Healing the wound, which that forward zeal of Peter would inflict.

The remaining Evangelist furnishes an additional Link in this Historical Chain. He gives us the very names of the Parties concerned. *Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it, and smote the high Priest's Servant, and cut off his right ear: the Servant's name was Malchus. Then Said JESUS unto Peter, "Put up thy sword into the sheath! The Cup, Which My FATHER hath Given Me, shall I not Drink It?"*—John xviii, 10, 11.

Here, however, is the same gentle Reproof Given to the indiscreet zeal of Peter, a zeal which forms a striking contrast to his subsequent abandonment of His Gracious MASTER, and which demonstrates that, amidst the fickleness to which Man is prone, he is, under all influences to which his own unassisted reason prompts, liable to error, and should, therefore, in every contemplated act, seek, by ejaculatory or silent prayer, the Light and Guidance of The HOLY SPIRIT, lest, even with intentions seemingly justifiable, he do not the Will or work of GOD.

△ "*All that take the sword shall perish by the sword.*" The Mosaic constitution declared, *That Whoso sheddeth Man's blood, by Man shall his blood be shed!*—Gen. ix, 6. In the Divine Revelations to the Apostle and favourite Disciple of CHRIST, it is Declared, "*He, that leadeth into captivity, shall go into captivity; he, that killeth with the sword, must be killed with the sword: (and it is added,) Here is the patience and the faith of the Saints!*"—Rev. xiii, 10. If not in the Life here, in That hereafter, thus will it be Rendered double; and if here, having killed or wounded in the spirit of rancour or animosity or violence or malice or hellish subtlety, our bodies be not, consequently, pierced with the sword of Justice or Retribution, our Souls will be wounded unto the second interminable Death of Hope in the Life beyond the grave. "*Be ye angry, and sin not! Let not the sun go down upon your wrath! Forgive Others, as ye would that GOD, for CHRIST'S Sake, should Forgive you!*" These are Lessons of DIVINE Truth; and how little they coincide with the usages of Society in the wars and violence subsisting between Nations and Individuals, not under Christian influence or control, and how opposed to what the Worldly-minded term the laws of Honour, it is

our duty both to observe ourselves, and urge that observance on Those with whom we have intercourse, in order that both in them and in ourselves Patience may have its perfect work, and The SPIRIT of our MAKER may Prevail within us.

*At the prayer of Elisha, the eyes of a young Man were made to see that the Mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha, [2 Kings vi, 17.]* to protect him, when beset by the Syrian Army at Dothan. And lo, This was The LORD'S Doing, and it was marvellous in the eyes of Elisha's Servant, to whom it was Miraculously Revealed. But, behold, A Greater than Elisha was here, even ONE, for Whom All the Power of GOD, as well as the Armies of Heaven, would have been Put forth, had He but Spoken the Word, and Called them to Punish and Lay waste a sinful and rebellious World, and Make His Foes His Footstool. In the visions of Daniel, the future Power of This GOD in Man, CHRIST JESUS, with Whom Past, Present, and To Come, are alike Known, is thus magnificently in Human idea, but infinitely short of the Reality, Displayed: *I beheld, till the Thrones were cast down, and The ANCIENT of DAYS did Sit; Whose Garment was white as snow, and the Hair of His Head like the pure wool: His Throne was like the fiery flame, and His Wheels as burning fire: a Fiery Stream issued and came forth from before Him: Thousand Thousands ministered unto Him; and Ten thousand times Ten Thousand stood before Him: the Judgment was Set; and the Books were Opened.*—Dan. vii, 9, 10. And shall we not then believe Him, when He Said, “*Thinkest thou that I cannot now Pray to My FATHER, and He shall Presently Give Me More than Twelve Legions of Angels?*” In confirmation of the Same Infinite Power over Angels and over Men, was the Revelation Made of CHRIST'S KINGDOM to His Favourite Disciple, the Apostle and Evangelist St. John, as appears more particularly in the following extract: *I beheld, and I heard the voice of many Angels round about The Throne; and the Beasts (or Living Creatures) and the Elders; and the Number of them was Ten Thousand times Ten Thousand, and Thousands of Thousands, saying, with a loud voice, “Worthy is The LAMB, That was Slain, to Receive Power and Riches and Wisdom and Strength and Honour and Glory and Blessing! And Every Creature, which is in Heaven and on the Earth and under the Earth, and Such as are in the Sea, and All that are in them, heard I, saying, ‘Blessing and Honour and Glory and Power be unto Him, That Sitteth upon The Throne, and unto The LAMB for Ever and Ever!’”*—Rev. v, 11 to 13.

Glorious and Grand as This Representation may seem to the Human imagination in this state, It will be found to fall infinitely short of the Reality in the World of Spirits, when The once Persecuted and Despised and Rejected and Crucified CHRIST (Who was then Very GOD, and might have Exercised the Power so as to have Summoned all the Angels of Heaven to His Deliverance, or, without their aid, might have Swept, by the Breath of His Mouth, all animated Nature from Creation,) shall Come, in the Fulness of The GODHEAD, to Judge and Fix the endless Destiny of All Mankind. Then will the Legions of the Whole Army of Heaven be the Appointed Instruments of Destruction to all His Enemies; and, if we make not Him our FRIEND here, He will not Befriend us with His Protection against That Destroying Army Hereafter. What CHRIST thus, before His Death, Declared, with reference to the Necessity for His Submitting to the Appointed Means of Accomplishing Man's Redemption, by Suffering in the Way Revealed in Holy Writ, He Confirmed by His Exposition of the Scriptures, concerning Himself after His Resurrection; for, whilst with the two Disciples on the morning after That Event, as They journeyed to Emmaus, He Said unto them, “*O Fools, and slow of heart to believe All That the Prophets have spoken! Ought not CHRIST to have Suffered These Things, and to*

*Enter into His Glory?" and, Beginning at Moses and All the Prophets, He Expounded to them in All the Scriptures The Things Concerning Himself.—Luke xxiv, 25 to 27. And again, on His Appearing amongst the whole Body of Disciples, He Said unto them, "These are the Words, Which I Spake unto you, while I was yet with you, 'That All Things must be Fulfilled, Which were Written in the Law of Moses and in the Prophets and in the Psalms Concerning Me.'" Then Opened He their understanding that they might understand The Scriptures; and Said unto them, "Thus it is Written, and Thus it Behoved CHRIST to Suffer and to Rise from the Dead the third day; and that Repentance and Remission of sins should be preached in His Name among all Nations."—Luke xxiv, 44 to 47.*

Here have we the Object of CHRIST'S Sufferings Set before us; and here the nature of the application, which it becomes us to make, of the knowledge of That Soul-Saving Truth, namely, to work out our own Salvation in faith and fear, and by a hearty and deep repentance of all our misdoings, our backslidings, and short comings, obtain the Offered Remission of our sins, for JESUS CHRIST'S Sake.

△ In that Same Hour Said JESUS to the Multitudes, "Are ye come out as against a Thief, with swords and staves for to take Me? I Sat daily with you Teaching in the Temple, and ye laid no hold on Me!" But all this was done, that the Scriptures of the Prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the Disciples forsook Him, and fled.—55, 56.

Their own folly would have confuted them. The Doctrines Inculcated by JESUS were passiveness and peace; and His Life was one continued Exemplification of His Precepts. Against Him no violence was necessary, unless the spirit of the Multitude should break forth to rescue Him; and, if such were the temper of them who had followed Him, unseduced by any Worldly object, and, on the contrary, discouraged in every expectancy of Worldly gratification, what could this augur but a Power against which Human power must, in the end, be ineffectually exerted, for, as Gamaliel reasoned, if it were of GOD it must stand; and if it were not, it would soon meet with destruction from The LORD. But when the heart is evil disposed the judgment becomes clouded. To this Address of our SAVIOUR, so powerfully did the Reasoning flash conviction on the minds of the Multitude, to whom it was Directed, that they answered Him never a word. But conviction has not its perfect work, save in conversion.

St. Mark's description of this Incident is thus: *And JESUS Answered, and Said unto them, "Are ye come out as against a Thief, with swords and with staves, to take Me? I was daily with you in the Temple Teaching, and ye took Me not! But The Scriptures must be Fulfilled:"* [Mark xiv, 48, 49.] agreeing in the spirit and, almost, in the letter of the Text.

St Luke's Relation of it is as follows: *Then JESUS Said unto the chief Priests and Captains of the Temple, and the Elders, which were come to Him, "Be ye come out as against a Thief, with swords and staves? When I was daily with you in the Temple, ye stretched forth no hands against Me. But this is your hour and the power of Darkness."*—Chap. xxii, 52, 53.

Here, under a different expression, is the same character of Resignation Displayed; and the Way, in Which The Scriptures should be Thereby Fulfilled, is clearly pointed out, namely, that from the indispensable Necessity of a Sufficient Atonement being Offered up for the sins of All of Human Kind, the power of Satan or Spiritual Darkness should, for a comparative hour, prevail over The SON of The MOST HIGH, and Darken the Light of the World; and that, through Such Eclipse, the Illuminations of The SPIRIT might Burst forth upon us, and safely Guide us to The SAVIOUR'S KINGDOM of Heavenly Glory.

Confident as the Disciples had been in their expectation of inalienable devotedness to their beloved MASTER and His Cause, and zealous as Peter had shown himself in His defence, yet, when put to the test, of *so little faith* were they, that because The Meek and Lowly JESUS, Who Came Purposely to Yield Himself up An Unresisting Victim to the Powers that were arrayed against Him, they shrunk from their connection with so apparently Self-Sacrificing A MASTER; and, though not altogether without a feeling of concern for His Fate, yet made they their first object the preservation of their own Lives. And was it in such an hour that His Own Followers, the Chosen Witnesses of His Miracles, and the Favoured Few, who were Admitted to the Secrets of His Council, upon whose ears had been Poured the Wisdom of His Discourses, and who had drank so copiously from the Streams of His Tenderness and Love, should forsake Him, and fly from the opportunity of lessening His Sufferings by sympathy and participation! Such, however, is but too generally the influence of the fear of the World, and of the tenacity to this life, and of the dread of bodily suffering, as to sacrifice to them the infinitely deeper, though more distant, Interests of the Soul: and, from the example before us, are we furnished with a striking instance of the dangers that attend the making any other power, than That of GOD, our fear, or the resting on any other protection than His in our difficulties and temptations.

St. Mark also hath it, *And they All forsook Him, and fled*: [Chap. xiv, 50.] thus corroborating what St. Matthew, in the integrity of his heart, recorded to his own reprehension. St. Mark goes on also to add an incident, not noticed by the other Evangelists, thus: *And there followed Him a certain young Man, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body; and the young Men laid hold on him, and he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked*.—Chap. xiv, 51, 52.

Adam knew not that he was naked, till he ceased to obey the Commandment of GOD: and naked, indeed, in Spirit, as well as body, must this young Man have found himself, when he ceased to follow the Footsteps of The Incarnate GOD; for CHRIST would have been unto his Immortal Part, at least, a Shield from all his Enemies, a Shelter from the storm, and a Shadow from the heat of Persecution. Let us be strong in The LORD, and in the Power of His Might, under whatever circumstances of danger that may threaten or overtake us! And let us not fear Man, whose breath is in his nostrils, and which thence departing, leaves him nothing to be accounted of, but as poor and powerless indeed; for even should he kill our body, yet hath he then nothing more that he can do: but let us fear Him, Who, having Killed the Body, can Destroy both Body and Soul in Hell, where nakedness and hunger and thirst and want and woe and despair will be the Portion of its Inmates for ever!

And they, that had laid hold on JESUS, led Him away to Caiaphas, the high Priest, where the Scribes and the Elders were assembled. But Peter followed Him afar off unto the high Priest's Palace, and went in, and sat with the Servants, to see the end. Now the chief Priests and Elders and all the Council sought false witness against JESUS, to put Him to death: but found None: yea, though many false Witnesses came, yet found they None. At the last came two false Witnesses, and said, "This Fellow said, 'I am able to destroy the Temple of GOD, and to build it in three days!'" And the high Priest arose, and said unto Him, "Answerest Thou nothing? What is it which These witness against Thee?" But JESUS Held His Peace. And the high Priest answered, and said unto Him, "I adjure thee, by The Living GOD, that thou tell us, whether thou be The CHRIST, The SON of GOD?" JESUS Saith unto him, "Thou hast said: nevertheless I Say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see The SON of Man Sitting on the Right Hand of Power, and Coming in the Clouds of HEAVEN." Then the high Priest rent his clothes, saying, "He hath spoken blasphemy! What further need have we of Witnesses? behold, now ye have heard



his blasphemy. What think ye?" They answered, and said, "He is guilty of death!" Then did they spit in His Face, and buffeted Him; and Others smote Him with the palms of their hands, saying, "Prophecy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee?"—57 to 68.

How infinitely past Human comprehension is This Condescension of The DIVINE MAJESTY, to Suffer Himself, in The Person of The HOLY JESUS, not only to be Made Flesh and to Dwell among us, but to be insulted, arraigned and condemned before a Tribunal of the most prejudiced and Spiritually-proud of His Own Creatures, whom He could at once have Destroyed and Sentenced to utter annihilation or confusion by one Exercise of His Power! The Assembly, before which our SAVIOUR was Brought, should have been foremost to have hailed the Advent of The PRIEST after the Order of Melchizedek; the high Priest should have laid his mitre at His Feet, and bowed in holy and dutiful reverence to Him, as The LAMB of GOD, That was to Take away the sin of the World. The Sanhedrim should have set to the People the example of a heart-prompted adoration of The SAVIOUR of Souls. But, on the contrary, both they and those, over whom they had influence, having blinded themselves with pride, misread and misinterpreted The Scriptures of Truth, became blind Leaders of the Blind, themselves being the chief Instruments of Man's rejection of That Spiritual KINGDOM, of Which The PRINCE of Peace was, from Its Foundation, and is and will be for Everlasting, Its GOVERNOR. Jealousy and an unhallowed love of Earthly distinction, influenced all the measures of that Council; they feared the overthrow of their temporal power, and, therefore, by every artifice opposed themselves to What was so Opposed to its abuse, heedless alike of the consequences that might affect the Nation, and of the fearful responsibility, which they might bring upon themselves, for so unrighteous a judgment under the hypocritical mask of zeal for true Religion. They uttered their judgment under a predetermination to hear only Witnesses against The ACCUSED, and to pervert all they heard from Him to their own prejudgment and condemnation of Him. Such is the fatal influence of Pride and of its usual associate Prejudice; and to what awful lengths of oppression and wrong will they lead their Votaries! even to perjury and subornation of perjury; nor do they shrink from the perpetration of murder under the semblance of a Judicial necessity.

The application of so many false Witnesses is a lamentable proof of the baneful influence of the love of money, and of the debasing and corrupting effect of perverted Authority: and the rejection of so many, is but a proof of the wariness and malignant purpose of the Priests and Elders in the effort to bring forward those, who might best aid their object, by lulling the suspicions of the People, and uprooting such confidence as they had evinced in JESUS, as The MESSIAH; for the Common People had heard Him gladly, nor had they been backward in testifying such approval. This also shews that in the heart of Man, in his unregenerate state, there is often a disposition to evil, though without a simultaneous power to give efficacy to it; but all such depravity of heart will finally be revealed, and will assuredly bring down on itself the full measure of Retributive Justice, if, under the influence of a true and timely penitence and a lively faith, the burthen of such sin be not cast on This Same Condemned and Suffering JESUS. The nature of the accusation finally brought against our SAVIOUR, was not such as dispassionate Judges would, for an instant, have listened to, as sufficient to subject to imprisonment, much less to death: but when passion influences the mind, the exercise of power becomes a perversion of rectitude: and though the chief Priests, obviously, wished for a more crime-creating charge, they, in the grossest injustice, made this serve their purpose. Unpreju-

diced minds would have anticipated Gamaliel's reasoning, and have said, "Either this Assertion of the Accused is of GOD, and then it cannot but be in His Time Fulfilled; or it is of Man in the infatuation of a false faith, and the effect of a heated or misguided imagination, and then it will come to nought." That CHRIST had Used These Words is true; but He Used them in a Sense, Which not only Witnesses and Judges, but even His Own Disciples did not understand, and could not rightly interpret. The Words, in their literal meaning, Imported no offence, nor Contemplation of any: for the accusation was, not that JESUS Said He would Destroy the Temple, but that He would Rebuild it in three days, if it were destroyed. If it had been alleged that by That Saying He Excited the People to violence and destruction, by inducing them to make the experiment, and pull down the Temple, the answer is apt, that It had not had that effect; and that true policy would suggest the avoiding It as a subject of public discussion, lest it might excite such turbulence. But the destruction of CHRIST, Who was alike Inimical to their unspiritual habits and abuse of power, was their aim, and not the preservation of the Temple. It is plain that the Enemies of CHRIST calculated more on His Committing Himself by some Expression, to which they meant to urge and excite Him, than on the success of their opening accusation against Him. It was, therefore, that they propose to Him to Speak in His Defence, hoping to entrap Him in His Talk; but finding Him Unwilling to Break silence, they feel the inadequacy of the charge to their object, and call upon Him, by expressions, calculated to rouse His Feelings and Attention, to Acknowledge openly before them and the People, *Whether He was The SON of GOD*; and this, obviously, not from any desire of getting at the Truth, and as having doubts on so Important a Matter, but that they might call for the Sentence of Condemnation and Execution upon Him, and induce the People to acquiesce therein. Challenged to Confession, it was not in CHRIST to Deny Himself, or to Disown His DIVINITY: He, therefore, not only Declared Himself to be The SON of GOD, but publicly Proclaimed that, though He then Submitted to Earthly Judgment, He should Eventually be The HIGHEST in Heaven, and be Clothed with MAJESTY and Power to Judge both Quick and Dead. The hellish scheme thus succeeded, and exulting inwardly at the success, the high Priest, in the acme of Human artifice, put on the outward garb of indignation and abhorrence at the asserted blasphemy, though he was himself the Vilifier and Blasphemer of The SON of The MOST HIGH. Here was the food so craved after, whereby the passions and hastily-acting zeal of a misguided Multitude might be won over to their object; and, doubtless, the Emissaries of these purjured and profligate Judges led the way, in crying out for extreme punishment as against a Blasphemer, and stimulated the Bystanders to add mockery and reproach and nauseating insult to harass and try the Meek and Patient Spirit of JESUS, thus additionally embittering the few remaining moments in reserve for Him, in which His Human Nature had to be Fortified against the approaching and Foreseen Agony of Crucifixion.

*Fools make a mock of sin; but GOD will Mock when their fear cometh:* and in the strong hyperbolical character of the Eastern expression, *will Laugh at their calamity*. And if the unthinking and untutored Rabble shall stand or fall by the law in their hearts, how shall they, who, appointed as their Guides, mislead them, be able to stand, when The LORD *Cometh to Judge the World with Righteousness and the People with Equity*? CHRIST could instantly have Told, for He well Knew, who it was that smote Him; and He could, moreover, have Told who had smote Him in mistaken zeal, and who from wickedness of heart; for He Knew what was in Man, and Sought, by His Sufferings, Forgiveness from His Heavenly FATHER of those, *who knew not what they did*. But to us

He hath Given a Law, Whereby we may try the Spirits, whether they be of GOD, or whether they be of Men; and a Rule, whereby, through patience and perseverance and supplication of The HOLY SPIRIT, we may try and prove our own hearts, and decide whether CHRIST would Countenance our immediate proceedings, and may so accordingly have reasonable ground of hope or of fear; in that He will either Acknowledge us in the Day of His Power, or will Pronounce upon us that awful and despair-filling Sentence, "*I never Knew you.*"

St. Mark's description of these Events is as follows: *And they led JESUS away to the high Priest; and with him were assembled all the chief Priests and the Elders and the Scribes: and the chief Priests and all the Council sought for witness against JESUS to put Him to death; and found none: for Many bare false witness against Him, but their witness agreed not together: and there arose Certain and bare false witness against Him, saying, 'I will destroy this Temple, that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another, made without hands.'* But neither so did their witness agree together. And the high Priest stood up in the midst, and asked JESUS, saying, "*Answerest thou nothing? What is it, which these witness against thee?*" But He Held His Peace, and Answered nothing. Again the high Priest asked Him, and said unto Him, "*Art thou The CHRIST, The SON of THE BLESSED!*" And JESUS Said, "*I Am! And ye shall see The SON of Man Sitting on the Right Hand of POWER, and Coming in the Clouds of Heaven!*" Then the high Priest rent his clothes, and saith, "*What need we any further Witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye?*" And they all condemned Him to be guilty of death: and Some began to spit on Him, and to cover His Face, and to buffet Him, and to say unto Him, "*Prophecy!*" and the Servants did strike Him with the palms of their hands.—Chap. xiv, 53. 55 to 65.

This Evangelist thus in one point differs from St. Matthew, in rendering the accusatory words, "*I will destroy this Temple:*" but then he adds, that the Witnesses, in this respect, did not agree among themselves. St. Matthew may, therefore, have preserved the testimony of One, St. Mark of the Other; but Both concur in the important point of the insufficiency of that accusation, and in the artifice of the high Priest, in himself pressing questions on JESUS, doubtless, with the fell purpose of involving Him by His Answers.

From St. John's Gospel-narrative it seems that the Words actually Uttered by CHRIST were those mentioned by St. Matthew, for on the Jews calling upon Him for a Sign of the Authority He Claimed to Purify the Temple, JESUS Answered, and Said unto them, "*Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will Raise it up!*" Then said the Jews, "*Forty and six years was this Temple in building; and wilt Thou rear it up in three days?*" (And the Apostle adds,) *But He Spoke of the Temple of His Body.*—John ii, 18 to 21.

It is highly probable that Some of the Witnesses, feeling the weakness of the accusation if confined to the Words as actually Used by our SAVIOUR, might pervert Them in the manner stated by St. Mark, in order to give more weight to the crimination. In another point there is a distinction rather than a difference between the Text and that of St. Mark; the Latter making our SAVIOUR, in Answer to the high Priest's question, "*Whether He was The CHRIST, The SON of The BLESSED?*" Saying at once and unequivocally, "*I Am!*" But it is obvious, Whatever were the precise Words Used on the Occasion, that the meaning attached to them, and that instantly and as with one voice, was such as Those Words, mentioned by St. Mark, convey, namely, that JESUS Avowed Himself to be The Expected MESSIAH and The SON of GOD.

△ The Account, as furnished by the remaining Evangelist, is thus: *Then took they JESUS and led Him and Brought Him into the high Priest's house: and the*

*Men, that held JESUS, mocked Him and smote Him: and when they had blind-folded Him, they struck Him on the Face, and asked Him, saying, "Prophesy, who is it that smote thee?" and many other things blasphemously spake they against Him. And as soon as it was day, the Elders of the People and the chief Priests and the Scribes came together, and led Him into their Council, saying, "Art thou The CHRIST? tell us!" And He Said unto them, "If I Tell you, ye will not believe! And if I also Ask you, ye will not answer Me; nor let Me Go! Hereafter shall The SON of Man Sit on the Right Hand of The Power of GOD!" Then said they All, "Art thou then The SON of GOD?" And He Said unto them, "Ye say That I Am!" And they said, "What need ye any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth!"* — Chap. xxii, 54. 63 to 71.

The order of the narrative is here somewhat varied, but in substance it fully agrees with that of the other two Evangelists: it is less circumstantial, as it omits any express mention of the conspiracy with the false Witnesses, though the words, "*What need we any further witness!*" imply the consideration of some prior evidence, though no direct notice is taken of it. The personal insults offered to our SAVIOUR, in their wanton barbarity, are here made to precede the arraignment before the Jewish Sanhedrim; whereas the other Evangelists place this occurrence subsequent to, and make it a consequence of JESUS Proclaiming Himself *The CHRIST*. In this account of St. Luke no notice is taken of the first accusation brought against Him, nor, of course, of His silence under such charge; but a feature of novelty is given in the Answer of our SAVIOUR to the question put to Him, "*Art thou The CHRIST?*" HE Knew the hearts of His Judges, and that for very envy and jealousy they had accused Him: HE Knew they had shut their eyes against the Light of DIVINE Truth, and had steeled their hearts against the embrace of Christian Faith; being rather Worshippers of the Mammon of Unrighteousness, though outwardly Professors of the Religion of JEHOVAH: HE Said, therefore, and Said truly, "*If I Tell you, ye will not believe; and if I also Ask you, ye will not answer Me; nor let Me Go.*" The Justice of these Observations All must have inwardly felt; though not One had the honesty or courage to avow. Their sole object, under the blinding infatuation of prejudice, was to seek occasion to condemn; and, through the sanguinary and determined bent of their minds, they, under an affectation of only wishing to arrive at Truth, strove to draw from Him words that would, in the absence of other testimony, and under their eager and clamorous perversion, amount to Self-crimination, and encourage them to call down on Him the People's condemnation. For not only did they ask the question with no view to have light thrown upon their minds, but, when Answered, they sought not calmly and dispassionately the Illustration from Revelation, by consulting their Prophets to see, *whether these Things could be so*; neither would they wait to hear from Him the Scriptural Texts and Authorities, upon Which His Claim to be The MESSIAH was Founded. For had they encouraged Him to Enter upon His Defence, doubtless, HE would not only have fully Justified His Pretension, but, with an Energy and Force, far Surpassing St. Paul, *have Reasoned of Righteousness and Judgment to Come*, Which would have made every Member of the Sanhedrim tremble upon his judgment seat. But, contrary to every principle of justice, silence was enjoined the Accused, except when by its being broken, the hope arose that their evil purpose might be best answered. Such is the tyrannical sway that the uncurbed passions exercise over the minds of Men, tending to produce Self-condemnation from Self-convicted folly and injustice here, and utter and inevitable confusion of the Soul, when *tried in the Balance of DIVINE Justice, and found*, as it assuredly will be, *wanting*, in the Life to Come. How will they be then oppressed and

overwhelmed with remorse, when He, Who Freely Offered Himself as The ORACLE of Eternal Peace and Spiritual Happiness, shall, in the Awful Thunder of OMNIPOTENCE, Utter the Irreversible Sentence of Excommunication! How fruitless will then be the wish, that every ear, which had heard Him, had heard Him gladly, and with a sincere desire to arrive at a knowledge of the Truth, as It is in JESUS, and with a singleness of mind to put faith in the Testimony Borne of His Mediatorial Office! And how will the Soul then rue the rejection of Him by a hasty and harsh judgment upon His Offers of Mercy and DIVINE Reconciliation! The applause of a betrayed Multitude, could it be then vociferated, (which assuredly it will not,) could then have no charm or alleviation even for a moment: on the contrary, their trembling Spirits will call for a twofold vengeance by their execrations on their misleading Guides for having, through pride and subtlety, influenced that Multitude to war against their MAKER, and put in jeopardy, if not involved in Condemnation, their Immortal Souls. All denial of JESUS, as The SON of The MOST HIGH, and as The Only SAVIOUR of Souls, will then for ever cease; for All shall see Him as He is, The LORD of Life, and JUDGE of Quick and Dead.

The beautifully concluding Figure of CHRIST'S Triumphant Advent, in the *Clouds of Heaven*, is not noticed by St. Luke, but the most material Part of our SAVIOUR'S Declaration, "*That CHRIST, as The SON of Man, (a Phrase Adopted and Applied by Himself, and so understood by His Hearers, as Significant of The MESSIAH being GOD-Incarnate,) shall hereafter Sit on the Right Hand of POWER,*" is tantamount: St. Luke adding expressly, "*The Power of GOD;*" leaving no room for any doubt as to the character of That POWER with Which He is to be Associated, and Its Infinite Superiority over that of every Earthly Potentate. Various as are the Expressions thus attributed by the three Evangelists to our SAVIOUR, as the Answer Given by Him to His Accuser's questions, "*Whether He was The SON of GOD?*" it is obvious that They All Meant to Convey the Same Idea, namely, that JESUS Openly Avowed Himself to be The MESSIAH; and that All, who heard Him, so understood Him: "*Thou hast said:*" "*I Am:*" and "*Ye say That I Am:*" when Coupled with the Context are Intended to Convey the Same Meaning, and should be so read and applied; and in reading the last Passage, the sense is assisted by laying the stress on the Word "*That.*"

△ The remaining account, as collected from St. John, is as follows: *Then the Band and the Captain and Officers of the Jews took JESUS, and bound Him, and led Him away to Annas first, for he was Father in law to Caiaphas, which was the high Priest that same year. The high Priest then asked JESUS of His Disciples and of His Doctrine. JESUS Answered him, "I Spake openly to the World; I ever Taught in the Synagogue and in the Temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I Said nothing! Why askest thou Me? Ask them which heard Me, What I have Said unto them! behold, they know What I Said!" And, when He had Thus Spoken, One of the Officers, which stood by, struck JESUS with the palm of his hand, saying, "Answerest thou the high Priest so?" JESUS Answered him, "If I have Spoken evil, bear witness of the evil! but, if well, why smitest thou Me?" Now Annas had sent Him bound unto Caiaphas, the high Priest.—Chap. xviii, 12. 13. 19 to 24.*

Here we have recorded a further indignity offered to our Blessed SAVIOUR, the *binding*, as a Violator of the peace, or a Robber, The Meek and Lowly LAMB of GOD. He is here also represented as additionally *Harrassed* by being dragged from one Authority to Another, from Annas to Caiaphas in this state of humiliation and insult. A more minute report is here also made of what passed on His Examination before the mock tribunal of Justice; for

which we are indebted to the devoted attachment of the Evangelist to his MASTER, which prompted him to follow Him into the Judgment Hall; though himself known to the high Priest as a Disciple of CHRIST. JESUS is here made to Urge, Argumentatively, the unreasonableness of their manner of proceeding against Him, in first impelling Him to a Bar of criminal Justice, and then to require from Him to be His Own Accuser. But He Recalls to their minds the rules which should influence in the administration of Justice. The Reasoning Which He Offered was unanswerable; and to extricate the Council from their difficulty, One of the Hirelings of the Court resorted, as is but too commonly done where offence is taken by Depositories of Earthly Power, to personal abuse and violence, and The Incarnate GOD, The JUDGE of all the World, was struck in His Face by a ready Minion of assumed Earthly Power and Justice. On this Occasion, Foreknowing the far Bitterer Cup of Suffering That was preparing for Him, The MESSIAH did not Think Fit to Exemplify the Admonition He had once thus Given to His Disciples, "*If thine Enemy smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him thy left cheek also!*" but neither, in Exercise of the Omnipotence That Belonged to Him, did He Blast, with a Look of Resentment, the Wretch who had thus causelessly assailed Him. On the contrary, He only Called his recollection to the Facts, and, consequently, to the principles that should actuate every Minister of Justice or of Judicial power, however high or subordinate: "*If I have Spoken evil, bear witness of the evil!*" If I have been guilty of an offence against the Law, give testimony thereof before these My Judges, and let the Law thereupon take its course! "*But if I have Spoken Well, (and that I have so Done the silence of these My Judges is presumptive proof.) why smitest thou Me?*"

Of The Spiritual DAVID, the Earthly Monarch of that name had thus Prophetically written: "*False Witnesses are risen up against Me, and Such as breathe out cruelly:*" [Ps. xxvii, 12.] and again, "*They laid to My charge things that I Knew not; they rewarded Me evil for Good to the spoiling of My Soul.*"—Ps. xxxv, 11, 12.

Successful as the wicked devices of these Enemies of all Righteousness were found to be, when thus directed against The Incarnate SON of GOD, we find the same detestable enginery brought to work against His Disciples; for when Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and Miracles among the People, and when Such of the Synagogue, who disputed with him, were not able to resist the wisdom and the Spirit, by which he spake, then they suborned Men, which said, "*We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and against GOD;*" and they stirred up the People, and the Elders and Scribes, and came upon him, and caught him, and brought him to the Council, and set up false Witnesses, which said, "*This Man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy Place, and the Law; for we have heard him say, 'That this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this Place, and shall change the customs, which Moses delivered us.'*" And All, that sat in the Council, looking stedfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an Angel.—Acts vi, 8 to 15.

And can the Servant have been greater than The MASTER? most assuredly not! If then the face of the Disciple was Angelic, What might have been That of The Holy JESUS, had He Put forth the Manifestation of His DIVINITY. But This He Did not; and, probably, His Countenance then Seemed marred and clouded, more than the Sons of Men, under the Agony of SPIRIT That Forced Itself upon Him, when Contemplating the full Weight of Those Sufferings He had to Undergo in Offering a Sufficient Atonement for the sins and a Ransom for the Souls of Mankind: Sufferings, in comparison with which the bodily pains of St. Stephen, in the barbarous murder committed on him, were

light indeed, even aiding to transport him but the earlier to the Glories of Eternal Rest.

The Mosaic Institution established the necessity of more Witnesses than one in support of accusations involving the punishment of death. *One Witness shall not rise up against a Man for any iniquity or for any sin in any sin that he sinneth; at the mouth of two Witnesses or at the mouth of three Witnesses shall the matter be established.*—Deut. xix, 15. Hence arose the necessity of more Witnesses than one; and the affected compliance with this Law by the chief Priests is a further proof of their hypocrisy.

*JESUS Held His Peace.* Of Him the Evangelical Prophet had predicted to that effect, representing thus: *HE was Oppressed, and He was Afflicted; yet He Opened not His Mouth: He is Brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and, as a sheep before her Shearers is dumb, so He Openeth not His Mouth.*—Isa. liii, 7.

The awful appeal to the Piety of our SAVIOUR, Who Came, not to Destroy, but to Fulfil the Law, and Who Bent Conformably to the Ceremonial, as well as to the Spiritual, Part of It, was not made in vain: and in the Levitical Code it was declared, *If a Soul sin, and hear the voice of swearing, and is a Witness, whether he hath seen or known of it, if he do not utter it, then he shall bear his iniquity.*—Lev. v, 1. And the sacredness, with which this Law was observed, is illustrated by that part of the history of the Jews, which describes their forbearance, even amidst the pride of conquest and the cravings of hunger, because their King had, with the invocation of a curse, interdicted food. *And the Men of Israel were distressed that day; for Saul had adjured the People, saying, "Cursed be the Man, that eateth any food until Evening, that I may be avenged on mine Enemies!" So None of the People tasted any food: and when the People were come into the Wood, behold, the honey dropped, but no Man put his hand to his mouth; for the People feared the oath.*—1 Sam. xiv, 24, 26.

The Words Used by our SAVIOUR, as Figurative of the Glory of His Second Advent, were Confirmatory of the Prophetical Description given of It by Daniel, where he says, *I saw in the night visions, and, behold, ONE, Like The SON of Man, Came with the Clouds of Heaven, and Came to The ANCIENT of Days; and they brought Him near before Him: and there was Given Him Dominion and Glory and A KINGDOM, that All People, Nations, and Languages should serve Him: His Dominion is an Everlasting Dominion, Which shall not pass away; and His KINGDOM That, Which shall not be destroyed.*—Dan. vii, 13, 14.

Our SAVIOUR had before Alluded to the Glory That Awaited Him in His Spiritual KINGDOM, when He is to be The JUDGE of Quick and Dead [see Chapter xvi, 27, 28; xxiv, 30, 31; xxv, 31]. To the faithful and guileless Nathanael He also Said, *"Verily, Verily, I Say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see Heaven Open, and the Angels of GOD ascending and descending upon The SON of Man."*—John i, 51. Of Him also the Gentile Apostle declared, *"CHRIST both Died and Rose and Revived, that He might be LORD both of the Dead and Living; for we shall All stand before the Judgment Seat of CHRIST."*—Rom. ix, 9, 10. And What Glory can, in Man's conception, surpass, or what Power equal, That of being The ARBITER of the Everlasting Destiny of every Soul, that shall have lived from the beginning to the end of Time? Solemn are the assemblies of Earthly Tribunals, where an individual Criminal is arraigned, and on the issue of which hangs the alternative of his temporal life or death; a life which, if then saved, may, from accident or illness, cease in the succeeding hour; and a death, which if then inflicted, may, on repentance, as in the case of One of the Fellow Sufferers with our Crucified REDEEMER, open to an instantaneous Entrance into Paradise. But how is the mind exhausted in a sight

around the Spirits of a congregated World, and how utterly unequal is it to the conception of The MAJESTY of HIM, Who is Above All and Over All, and at Whose Call the Dead will rise to life, and with the Living will await His Righteous and Irreversible Judgment! *For The LORD Himself shall Descend from Heaven with a Shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the Trump of GOD: and the Dead in CHRIST shall rise first; then Such as are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the Clouds, to meet The LORD in the Air.*—1 Thess. iv, 16, 17.

What unutterable consolation is This Prospect calculated to afford to the pure and pious Soul, which hath faith in the Mercies of GOD through the Merits of The SON of His Love; and which, by penitence and prayer, and every disposition to amendment and conformity to the Will of GOD, seeketh the attainment of such Final Glorification, as *ever to be with The LORD*. The Advancement of JESUS to the Seat of OMNIPOTENCE was foretold by the holy Psalmist, when he acknowledged himself to be the Creature and Worshipper of Him as his Spiritual LORD; though conscious of becoming His Earthly Ancestor, when he thus wrote in the cx Psalm: *THE LORD Said unto my LORD, "Sit Thou at My Right Hand, until I Make Thine Enemies Thy Footstool."* With the like Prophetic eye the Martyr Stephen was Permitted to view the Exaltation of his once Humiliated MASTER; and drew from Thence consolation and support amidst the cruel effects of the hatred, malice, and revenge assailing him; *For (as is recorded of him in Acts vii, 55 to 60,) he, being full of The HOLY GHOST, looked up stedfastly into Heaven, and saw the Glory of GOD, and JESUS Standing on the Right Hand of GOD, and said, "Behold, I see the Heavens Opened, and The SON of Man Standing on the Right Hand of GOD!" Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, and cast him out of the City, and stoned him: and they stoned Stephen, calling upon GOD, and saying, "LORD JESUS, Receive my Spirit!" And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, "LORD, Lay not this sin to their charge!" And when he had said this, he fell asleep.* And can there be wanting a stronger evidence of the Truth, as It is Declared to be in JESUS, than this practical testimony offered of It by St. Stephen, amidst persecution and acute bodily suffering, and in the very jaws of a hurried and violent death? *For if (as saith St. Paul,) in this Life only we have hope in CHRIST JESUS, we are of all Men most miserable!* How vain and fruitless, and full of folly would have been St. Stephen's perseverance in appealing to the *ast* unto CHRIST, if he had not believed in his Soul, that He was Able and Willing to Save that Soul alive and in Heavenly Happiness through all Eternity. In that confidence, therefore, he not only willingly, but joyfully, gave up this present life, though amidst much of cruel torture. And how does this example of St. Stephen encourage us in the contemplation of the fruits of the Victory over Sin and Death, Which CHRIST, by His Incarnate Life, and free Surrender to a torturing death, has Obtained on behalf of the Souls of All who believe in Him, to persevere unto the end at the hazard of all temporal ease, and defiance of death itself, however awful its approach in a worldly view!

The rending of garments is a natural action under extremely agonized feelings, peculiarly characteristic of utter despair. Thus in the earlier history of the Jews, when the Chief Officers of King Hezekiah had had their ears assailed with the blasphemy and threatened vengeance of Rabshakeh, the Assyrian General, they came to Hezekiah *with their clothes rent*, and on hearing their arrative, the *King rent his robes likewise.*—2 Kings xviii, 37; xix, 1. In that use we acknowledge the consistency of the action and its force in illustrating the apprehensions the Parties laboured under, however we may regret the exem-




plification of their lack of faith. But the high Priest, who rent his clothes on the Annunciation by our SAVIOUR of the Glory, Which His Enemies, then before Him, should thereafter see Surrounding Him, did it, for an artificial effect, the more to rouse and inflame the passions of the People, and to urge them to call for destruction on The Meek and Submissive JESUS. All hypocrisy is culpable and dangerous, and is the offspring of that blindness, to which, by pride and worldly-attachment, we voluntarily become subject; but religious hypocrisy, and most especially that which under the rent-torn cloak of holy zeal is assumed, that sinister and unhallowed purposes may covertly be effected or indulged in, is most hateful to GOD, and most amenable to His Unsparing Judgment; for it is indeed *sinning against The HOLY GHOST*, setting at nought His Admonitions and Remonstrances, from a desire only to appear fair, though falsely so, in the eyes of Man.

By the Levitical Law it was Declared, That *he, that blasphemeth the Name of The LORD, should surely be put to death; and all the Congregation should certainly stone him: as well the Stranger, as he that is born in the Land, when he blasphemeth the Name of The LORD, shall be put to death.*—Lev. xxiv, 16.

The Priests and Scribes were bent on the destruction of JESUS, and knowing that no fault could be found in Him, and that no credit could be given to any accusation brought against Him, unless it were founded on His Assumption of DIVINITY, Which their pride would not concede to Him, they sought eagerly for an opportunity to draw from Him Such an Assertion; and when by their artifice they succeeded, then, feigning their sole motive to be the Honour of GOD and the Truth and Purity of His Word, filled the ears of Those around with their prejudices, crying out against The SON of GOD as a Blasphemer, and invoking on His sinless Head the extreme punishment of the Law. For on Pilate's afterwards remonstrating with them, and declaring that *he found no fault in Him*, the Jews replied, *We have a Law, and by our Law he ought to die, because he made himself The SON of GOD.*—John xix, 6, 7.

The scoffs and insults thus offered to The Holy MESSIAH, had been foretold thus minutely by the Evangelical Prophet: "*I Gave My Back to the Smilers, and My Cheeks to them, that plucked off the hair: I Hid not My Face from shame and spitting:*" [Isa. l, 6.] and again, *HE is despised and rejected of Men; A Man of sorrows and Acquainted with grief: and we hid, as it were, our faces from Him: He was despised; and we esteemed Him not.*—Isa. liii, 3.

But Voluntary and Fore-Ordained as was This Submission of The SON of GOD, to His Creatures' indignities and injustice and ingratitude towards Him, the sin is not the less to be laid at those Creatures' doors, neither are we, though we live not in the Days of His Sojourn upon Earth, in less danger of falling, virtually, into the like offending if we persecute Him in the spirit of Infidelity; despising the Government and rejecting the Counsel of CHRIST, whether in avowed rebellion against Him, or hypocritically belying, by our Lives, His Doctrine Which we outwardly profess. And when That Time shall come, at Which the Fulness of CHRIST'S Power shall be Displayed, what floods of sorrow will overwhelm All, who added, without penitence, to His Sorrows, and, thereby, made Him Additionally and more Deeply Acquainted with Grief! But to the penitent and contrite Heart, which, by the Stripes Borne by CHRIST, has been Healed of its own wounds, what an ineffably delightful Prospect, and what exhaustless Stores of True Riches will, in That Day, be Laid open, when CHRIST, our REDEEMER and our SAVIOUR-GOD, shall be All in All; and He shall Say unto them, who are found His at His Coming, "*Come ye Blessed of My FATHER, enter into the Joy Prepared for you from the beginning of the World!*"

Now Peter sat without in the Palace: and a Damsel came unto him, saying, "Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee!" But he denied before them all, saying, "I know not what thou sayest!" and when he was gone out into the porch, another Maid saw him, and said unto them that were there, "This Fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth!" And again he denied with an oath, "I do not know the Man!" And after a while came unto him they, that stood by, and said to Peter, "Surely thou also art One of them! for thy speech bewrayeth thee!" Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, "I know not the Man!" And immediately the cock crew. And Peter remembered the Word of JESUS, Which Said unto him, "Before the cock crow thou shalt deny Me thrice!" And he went out and wept bitterly.—69 to 75. 

Peter, like too many zealously professing Christians, had not that knowledge of himself and of the measure of temptation, beyond which he could not stand the fiery trial. When, with a drawn sword in his hand, we have seen the forwardness of his zeal, and the daring and courage he was eager to display and put forth for the rescue of his beloved MASTER, being only restrained by the peaceful Bidding of That MASTER from extended and fatal violence. But when all hope of resistance was vain, and JESUS Submissively Resigned Himself to the perverted power of Human Judicature, and to the Sentence of Death of the most painful and ignominious Kind, Peter became unnerved, and though with no diminished love towards his LORD, yet with too much clinging to this life, grossly betrayed himself, and sought his own preservation in the sad "refuge of lies." He went into the Hall of Justice to see the end; a curiosity perfectly natural and commendable as a first mark of faithful attachment. But bowed down with surprise and sorrow at his Holy MASTER'S Condemnation, he was startled at the challenge, which involved his individual security, and meanly sunk into the hypocrisy of prevarication; evading the direct question, by affecting not to understand it. In the succeeding charges we find him daringly dismissing the warning of conscience, evidenced in his timidity on a first offending, and boldly disclaiming, and that with oaths and imprecations, even an acquaintance with Him, Whom he had himself pronounced to be The CHRIST, The SON of GOD! and Whom he had left all to follow. Yet how weak and foolish is it in those, who hastily and unsparingly condemn Peter, not to judge themselves by the experience of their own frailty and the still small voice of their own chiding consciences amidst the frequent infractions of their resolutions, and their oft-backslidings and slights of their prompted duties. It is, indeed, a progressive work to steel and harden the heart against the impulses of conscience as exemplified by Peter, though, as in his case, the degrees are frequently of rapid advancement; and hence we learn the extreme importance of checking the first risings of a disposition to sinfulness or error, and of stifling the propensity at its very birth; for by yielding to its first seduction, we may be led on to an accumulation of evil, that may well nigh press on our Souls with the weight of despair. Resistance at first is comparatively easy; and the Soul, in the adoption of it, feels an exulting glow of delight at the conviction that it has the Approval of The ALMIGHTY, Omniscient GOD, and so takes courage to persevere in a course so happily begun. For if, in shrinking from one trial, or yielding to one temptation, we depart from the Truth, with whatever measure of hesitation or reluctance, we, to that extent, quench the Light of The SPIRIT; and, on after occasions, That Holy Light is in danger of becoming utterly Extinguished within us; thus demonstrating to what fearful depths of offending the Soul will sink, when it disregards the All-Seeing Eye of GOD; when it discards the love it should bear towards CHRIST, The REDEEMER; and when it sets at nought the Admonitions of The SPIRIT of Holiness and Truth. Peter had vowed a vow to The GOD of Jacob, and had sworn, as, at the time, he, doubtless, thought faithfully, to cleave to his LORD


through life and through death. And when the infraction of that vow in all its enormity rushed upon his mind, the first risings of penitential sorrow thereat manifested themselves: and though with Man that penitence might seem incomplete from the absence of the public recantation of his error, yet with GOD, Who Judgeth not as Man judgeth, and Whose Ways towards Man, for CHRIST'S Sake, are Ways of Mercy, it is not to be Extreme to Mark what is done amiss; for when Contemplating the Special Intercession of The SON of His Love for this very Peter, and Foreknowing the zeal he would afterwards display in That Cause, He Repudiated him not.

△ The narrative by St. Mark is as follows: *And Peter followed CHRIST afar off, even into the Palace of the high Priest; and he sat with the Servants, and warmed himself at the fire: and, as Peter was beneath in the Palace, there cometh One of the Maids of the high Priest, and when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him and said, "And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth!" but he denied, saying, "I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest." And he went out into the porch, and the cock crew. And a Maid saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by, "This is One of them." And he denied it again. And a little after they, that stood by, said again to Peter, "Surely thou art One of them, for thou art a Galilean, and thy speech agreeth thereto!" But he began to curse and to swear, saying, "I know not this Man, of whom ye speak." And the second time the cock crew: and Peter called to mind the Word, That JESUS Said unto him, "Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny Me thrice:" and, when he thought thereon, he wept.—Chap. xiv, 54. 66 to 72.*

In the agitated state of Peter's mind, it is not likely that he could draw near to the fire for any other purpose than to avoid suspicion as a Follower of The Accused and Condemned JESUS. The same mode of denial by evasiveness in the first instance, is noticed by this Evangelist, and the impression, which the consciousness of it was calculated to make on Peter's mind, is strengthened by the incident of the first crow of the cock, of which CHRIST had associatingly Forewarned him: and the wakefulness and vigilance of this bird are becoming emblems of the early risings of a tender and unchecked Conscience, which sounds the alarm within us in the instant that any evil act is done or contemplated, striving to awaken us to a sense of our danger, and to open our eyes from the darkness of sin to the light of Truth, and Righteousness and Heavenly Wisdom. But with too Many the voice of Conscience, though inwardly shrill and distinct at first, is heard only to be stifled, for the evil heart of Unbelief shuts its ear against it.

Dreadfully as Peter had foresworn all connection with and knowledge of his LORD and MASTER, and in a manner which might lead to the supposition that he had wholly discarded Him from his reverence and affection, so weak and full of inconsistency and inconstancy is the heart of Man, that in the same instant that he did so, being brought to a renewed recollection of the Truth of CHRIST'S Words, as a Prophecy but too fully Verified by Peter's own perversity, he sunk into Self-condemnation, which manifested itself by tears, that flowed from no unfeigned source; he retires from the scene of his disgraceful abandonment of his MASTER, Whom, though in words he had denied, yet in his heart, and when in converse with The SPIRIT, he acknowledged. And, doubtless, through his deep conviction of his sin and Self-condemnation, The LORD, Who Judgeth by the heart, did not Cast him off in Displeasure nor Take His HOLY SPIRIT from him. This narrative of St. Mark is more directly confirmatory of the supposition before entertained, that the Provincial dialect of Peter, as a Galilean, had betrayed him. Thus falsehood is beset with dangers, and that, which habit and, almost, Nature have confirmed in us so strongly, as

by its familiarity to elude suspicion, will expose, when we little suspect, its influence; and thus it is demonstrated that Truth is Wisdom, and the ways of Such Wisdom lead to pleasantness and her paths to Peace: when the terrors of fraud and lying and treachery and all manner of deceivableness embitter life, and in the Eternity of Final Destination, will swell largely the bitter cup of burning woe.

The description afforded us by another of the Evangelists, St. Luke, is thus:  *And Peter followed JESUS afar off: and when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the Hall, and were set down together, Peter sat down among them; but a certain Maid beheld him, as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him and said, "This Man was also with him!" And he denied Him, saying, "Woman, I know him not!" And after a little while Another saw him, and said, "Thou art also of them?" And Peter said, "Man, I am not!" And about the space of one hour after, Another confidently affirmed, saying, "Of a truth this Fellow also was with him; for he is a Galilean." And Peter said, "Man, I know not what thou sayest!" and immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew. And The LORD Turned and Looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the Word of The LORD, how He had Said unto him, "Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny Me thrice!" And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.—Chap. xxii, 54 to 62.*

It is observable that St. Luke has omitted the aggravations of Peter's offence in denying his LORD; confining himself to the simple fact of the denial: whether this was the effect of a deficiency in the information afforded him in the narrative of the incident, or to his tenderness for the character of Peter, whom he contemplated, amidst his occasional weaknesses, as a Pillar of strength in the Temple of The LORD, through the Power of The HOLY ONE, may afford scope for conjecture; but the fulfilment of the Prophecy, was what mostly struck the Evangelist's mind; and of This he has bequeathed to us his concurrent testimony. Both St. Matthew and St. Mark speak of a Maid having, on each of the two first challenges, sought to implicate Peter; but St. Luke leaves to be inferred that he, at least, understood the second Accuser was a Male: the difference is reasonably attributable to the source of his information not being so minute in this respect: it cannot, however, weaken the credit to the circumstances generally; nor should it impair the effect of the moral lesson we may derive from it. St. Luke also speaks of but one of the cock's crowing; this, likewise, is a very secondary incident: he goes on to say that about an hour intervened; certainly an unusual interval in cock crowing at the opening of day: but that species of the gallinaceous tribe are said to crow also at midnight.

*And The LORD Turned and Looked upon Peter!* Here we have an Incident brought before us, which Neither of the Other three Evangelists have noticed. And what must That Look have been? How Expressive of DIVINITY, as both Knowing and Foreknowing; and yet, doubtless, how was Its Rebuke Chastened by both Pity and Forgiveness. CHRIST had not Heard with His outward Ears His Favoured yet faithless Servant's repeated and profligate denial of Him: but His DIVINE Attribute of Omniscience Rendered that channel of information unnecessary. HE Heard, however, the cock crow, and then Looking on Peter, (without any previous information or Inquiry in what part of the crowded Hall of Justice he was,) with a Look, so Struck into the conscious heart of the Apostle a conviction that his sin had found him out, that he sunk into the lamentation, which bespoke the Self-chidings of his ingratitude and pusillanimity. Assailed, as our SAVIOUR was at the time, by the taunts and contumely, by the outrage and offensiveness of Many around Him, He yet, in the critical moment, Withdrew both His Thoughts and Feelings as to His Own

Sufferings, and Directed Them Exclusively on Peter. Yet in That Look, Which He Cast upon him, no Anger, no Resentment, no Contempt, no Threatenings were Associated; but, on the contrary, an Expression of Complacency at the Assurance, though He Knew and Foretold that Peter would so fall away from his Faith, that Satan would yield up the Victory over him, and that he would partake of That Salvation, Which CHRIST was about to Consummate the Purchase of by His Own Mediatorial Sacrifice for Peter, as well as for Every Other penitent Sinner and Believer. The Effect of This Look on Peter was to Awaken him, not only to a recollection of the discredited Foreboding, but to flash on him a conviction of his unmanly and ungrateful abandonment of Him, Whom he had before delighted to honour: for *he remembered the Words of The LORD; and went out, and wept bitterly*: so emphatically described was the sorrow which Peter felt on the occasion. And upon whom doth not The LORD Look in the same hour of offending, where the Fore-assurance of repentance exists, with the same Mildness of Reproof, the same Merciful Compassion; for His Love is over All His Works, and He Willeth not that Any should perish, but that All, through faith in His Sufferings and Merits, should obtain Pardon and regain Peace and Reconciliation, both in Time and in Eternity? And can we forget Him, Who so Continually Regardeth us with More than the eye of Parental Love? or, denying Him, as All of us sometimes, and Many, practically at least, always do, can we refrain, on reflection, from inwardly weeping, and that in all the bitterness of Spiritual sorrow, at such our backslidings? May Such of us, if any, as have hitherto altogether denied The LORD That Bought us, turn unto Him in weeping and fasting and praying, rending the heart rather than the garment, that He may Turn unto us, and may Have Mercy upon us.

It is apparent, from the different narratives, that Peter changed his position in the intervals of the charges made against him; for though at one time, as described by St. Mark, he was beneath with the Servants in the Palace, yet he returned to the Judgment Hall, and must have been there when CHRIST Looked upon him.

△ The last account, as obtained from St. John, is as follows: *And Simon Peter followed JESUS; and so did another Disciple; that Disciple was known unto the high Priest, and went in with JESUS into the Palace of the high Priest: but Peter stood at the door without: then went out that other Disciple, which was known unto the high Priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter. Then saith the Damsel, that kept the door, unto Peter, "Art not thou also One of this Man's Disciples?" He saith, "I am not." And the Servants and Officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals, for it was cold, and they warmed themselves. And after relating our SAVIOUR'S Examination, which, according to the majority of the accounts, occurred in the intervals of Peter's denial, the Apostle adds, *And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself; they said, therefore, unto him, "Art not thou also One of his Disciples?" He denied it, and said, "I am not." One of the Servants of the high Priest, being his Kinsman, whose ear Peter cut off, saith, "Did I not see thee in the garden with him?" Peter then denied again: and immediately the cock crew.*—Chap. xviii, 15 to 18. 25 to 27.*

It is probable that the other Disciple was St. John himself, as he usually wrote of himself in characteristic terms, rather than by his name, as "the Disciple, whom JESUS Loved." Peter seems to have yielded to the impulse of fear at the very threshold, though St. John had entered the Judgment Hall before him, and being known to the high Priest, was, probably, known as One of the Companions of JESUS. St. John designates the Persons who questioned Peter the first and the last time; and, in this respect, is more particular than the other Evangelists: but, like St. Luke, he forbore mentioning the aggravations

attending the denials; he omits, however, the still more interesting incident of the Prophetic Look Cast by our SAVIOUR on Peter, and the pang of conviction and Self-condemnation to which it gave rise. Upon the whole, from this back-sliding even of a zealous Disciple of CHRIST, we learn the insufficiency of our own strength or power to sustain us in the path of duty; and that, to insure our overcoming temptation and rising above trials, we must go forward in the Strength of The LORD, and, in a prayerful spirit, seek, by faith in The REDEEMER'S Sacrifice, for courage and conduct in every experience of the Christian warfare. Nor is the folly of Self-confidence more apparent than the danger of a first departure from the Ways of GOD'S Commands, in defiance of the still small voice of Conscience and the Reproving Influence of The HOLY SPIRIT, is manifest. Let us, therefore, trust only in The LORD and in the Power of His Grace, and make Him only our fear, and Him only our dread; remembering that His Eye is Ever upon us, and He Ever Heareth, and Rejoiceth to Hear, the prayers put forth to Him in the faith of The SON of His Love, and will never Leave us or Forsake us, if we forsake not Him, or, like Peter, return unto Him with penitence, and strive, eventually, to fulfil His Will in manifestation of our faith in CHRIST.

CHAP. XXVII.—When the Morning was come, all the chief Priests and Elders of the People took counsel against JESUS, to put Him to death: and when they had bound Him, they led Him away, and delivered Him to Pontius Pilate, the Governor.—1, 2. △

The season that brought the cheering and guiding light of the Sun of this lower World to the view of these blood-thirsty Israelites, brought not (as but for their infatuated prejudice it might have done,) the infinitely more Gladdening and Unfailing Light of The SUN of Righteousness to their Spiritual eyes; for their pride had so besottingly blinded them, that they could not distinguish between Truth and Error; they preferred to remain in their Spiritual darkness. Instead of being eager, at the burst of the day dawn, to hail the Advent of The MESSIAH, and to rejoice in the Purity of His Rule, Those, who as the appointed Guides of the People, should have led them to reverence and obey The LORD of Life, to catch the Flow of Supernatural Wisdom from His Lips, and to improve their understanding in the Ways of Godliness by His Example; to look to Him as The Great PHYSICIAN of Souls, and to seek the Uction of His Grace to soften and correct their hearts, perverted the sacred trust reposed in them, and to their own endless shame and confusion, and the imminent peril of the Immortal Souls confided to them, took deliberate and deep counsel together, and, with Satanic malignity, strove to have The Incarnate GOD immolated on the altar of their fury and false pride; hoping, doubtless, thereby, to confirm more immovably their influence over a People, whose ignorance they regarded as the best security for their not disputing the power exercised over them. Had they, in the spirit of meekness and of prayer, sought The DIVINE Guidance towards a right understanding as to the Office and Character of JESUS, and how far They Corresponded with the Prophecies in their cherished Writings, Which Pointed to A REDEEMER, how different would have been the result! But dawn, as this morning did, upon the faithless and persecuting hearts of the Rulers of the People, and who had thus, almost ere the night watches had fled, assembled together, striving to extinguish That LIGHT, Which Alone Imparteth Spiritual Guidance, a Day will come upon them, and though it will be, in one sense, a day of impenetrable gloom, and wrapt in darkness that will be felt, yet shall there be intervals of burning light, which will reveal to the Spirits of these Persecutors the enormity of their sin and the hatefulness of their folly. No agreement in concert will be there, except that of

Self-condemnation and mutual reprehension. The Same JESUS now Comes to us to accept or reject Him; and as our hearts are Prompted to act towards Him, will be our final Destiny for good or evil: "*He, that honoureth Me, (as Said our Gracious SAVIOUR,) him will I Honour: but whosoever is ashamed of The SON of Man, of him will The SON of Man be Ashamed, when He Cometh in the Clouds of Heaven to Judge the World.*"

The Chief Priests and the Scribes had the Inspired Writings of their Prophets to guide them in the Way of DIVINE Truth; but they would not search Those Scriptures with diligence and teachableness and the single desire to arrive at the Truth, with hearts thirsting and Spirits hungering after Righteousness and Wisdom in a perfect way.

David had Prophetically said, *The Kings of the Earth set themselves, and the Rulers take counsel together, against The LORD and against His ANOINTED:* [Ps. ii, 2.] but he prefaced it by asking, in the same Prophetic spirit, *Why do the People imagine a vain thing?* and he answered it by demonstrating the vanity of such imaginations, and the discomfiture of All, who wickedly yielded unto their influence, saying, *HE, That Sitteth in the Heavens, shall Laugh: The LORD shall Have them in Derision. Then shall He Speak unto them in His Wrath, and Vex them in His Sore Displeasure.* And he then proclaims the final Triumph of CHRIST over all His Adversaries, and His Exaltation to the Pinnacle of Power and Glory in the Highest Heavens, Saying, as The Oracle of GOD, "*Yet have I Set My KING upon My Holy Hill of Zion: I will Declare the Decree; The LORD hath Said unto Me, 'Thou art My SON; this Day have I Begotten Thee! Ask of Me, and I shall Give Thee the Heathen for Thine Inheritance, and the Uttermost Parts of the Earth for Thy Possession: Thou shalt Break them with a Rod of Iron: Thou shalt Dash them in pieces like a Potter's vessel.'*" And the Psalmist concludes with this Parental admonition, which we shall do well to apply, in spirit, to ourselves, since amidst all the varieties of condition prevailing in the World, there is none, to which the essence of such counsel may not be made profitably to extend: *Be wise now, therefore, O ye Kings; be instructed, ye Judges of the Earth! Serve The LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling: kiss The SON, lest He be Angry, and ye perish from the Way, when His Wrath is kindled but a little! Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him!*—Ps. ii.

The account by St. Mark is as follows: *And straightway in the morning the chief Priests held a consultation with the Elders and Scribes and the whole Council, and bound JESUS, and carried Him away, and delivered Him to Pilate.*—Chap. xv. 1.

△ St. Luke's is thus: *And as soon as it was day, the Elders of the People, and the chief Priests and the Scribes came together, and led JESUS into their Council: and the whole Multitude of them arose, and led Him unto Pilate.*—Chap. xxii, 66; xxiii, 1.

CHRIST was first Removed from the high Priest's Palace to the Assembly House or General Council Room of the Jewish Priesthood, and finally from thence to the seat of temporal power, the Palace of the Roman Governor, Pontius Pilate: the Spiritual pride of the Jews so completely blinding them, as to induce them to seek the destruction of Him, Who Alone could Set them free from an infinitely worse than the Roman bondage, even that of Sin and Satan.

St. John's Description is as follows: *Then led they JESUS from Caiaphas unto the Hall of Judgment: and it was early: and they themselves went not into the Judgment Hall, lest they should be defiled: but that they might eat the Passover. Pilate then went out unto them.*—Chap. xviii, 28, 29.

The Hall of Judgment was in the Governor's house, and, from the margin of our Bible, it seems that the Hebrew phrase will equally signify Pilate's house.

such was the absurd conduct to which the pride and persecuting spirit of the Jews, in their perverse interpretation of the Mosaic Law, carried them, that they disdained all intercourse with People of any other Nation than their own, and avoided, as infectious, the society of Heathens, though submitting, from necessity, to their rule: for even the Apostle Peter adverts to the strict letter of the Law, when Called by The HOLY GHOST to assist in the conversion, or confirmation in the right faith, of Cornelius, saying, *Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a Man, that is a Jew, to keep company with, or come unto One of another Nation! but* (he adds,) *GOD hath Shewed me that I should not call any Man common or unclean.*—Acts x, 28. And on Peter's arrival at Jerusalem, *they of the circumcision contended with him, saying, "Thou wentest in to Men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them!"*—Acts xi, 2, 3. And yet such were the rancour and malice of the Priests and Scribes, that they bore the unoffending JESUS to the Presence and power of Heathen Judges with such haste and recitancy, that they would not wait till the approaching feast of the Passover had been celebrated, when they might themselves have gone in with Him to the Heathen's Judgment Hall, and might have been purified from the effect of so doing by the Mosaic Purification, in time to mingle in the succeeding ceremonies of their Temple. In all points of faith we are thus, by an opposite example to be avoided, instructed to be humble-minded, and to seek, with zeal and perseverance, the Guiding and Directing Light of DIVINE Truth; and if, with minds so directed, we sedulously search the Scriptures, we shall find Them testify of Him, Whom the Jews madly rejected, and still obstinately disclaim, but Whom to know, and rightly to use such knowledge, is Life and Peace and Joy Eternal. And if Therein be found some things hard to be understood, the Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT, Which we must unfeignedly pray for, will expound to us, in an accepted time, every Doctrine important for our guidance and essential to our Salvation. In this profligate treatment of JESUS, the Prophecy He Delivered to His Disciples on their going up to Jerusalem was, so far, literally fulfilled: "*The SON of Man shall be betrayed unto the chief Priests and unto the Scribes; and they shall deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock Him.*"—Matt. xx, 18, 19.

When Judas, which had betrayed Him, when he saw that He was Condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief Priests and Elders, saying, "I have sinned in that I have betrayed the Innocent Blood." And they said, "What is that to us? See thou to that!" And he cast down the pieces of silver in the Temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself. And the chief Priests took the silver pieces, and said, "It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood!" And they took counsel, and bought with them the Potter's field to bury Strangers in: wherefore that field was called "The Field of Blood" unto this day. Then was Fulfilled That, Which was spoken by Jeremy, the Prophet, saying, "And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of Him, That was Valued, Whom they of the Children of Israel did value, and gave them for the Potter's field; as The LORD Appointed me."—3 to 10.

Peter denied CHRIST, and repented, and it was Forgiven him; for he fully made Part of CHRIST'S Ministry. Judas betrayed CHRIST, and repented; but his repentance, like the offering of Cain, was not Accepted. St. Peter added to His repentance a believing heart, which was Counted unto him for Righteousness; but Judas manifested no such feeling or influence; on the contrary, he yielded up all confidence in the Sufficiency of CHRIST'S Atonement; and, in a like spirit to that of Cain, in effect said, *Mine iniquity is too heavy for me to bear*, and to shrink, imaginatively, from its contemplation, committed Self-murder. Difficult as this may seem to be reconciled to the superficial judgment of the Worldly-minded, yet GOD, Who Requireth truth in the inward



parts, and Who seeth not as Man seeth, will assuredly reconcile it to all Minds in the Day of Universal Judgment, (when all things shall be made manifest, even the most hidden thoughts of the heart,) and Who will Draw, beyond the power of dispute or contradiction, the Line between the repentance not to be repented of, and that, which worketh not to profit, being without faith, and therefore dead. Let us, in all things, try our hearts, whether they be right with GOD; and His Word will be an Infallible Criterion by which to judge; for then only can the outward act or ceremony be Acceptable unto Him, when the inward feelings and disposition of the Soul accord with That Word. To be sorry for an offence is one step; but it is only one step towards a repentance that is profitable unto Salvation. Unless we look to GOD, as The JUDGE of that offence, and seek from Him, in fervency and contrition of Spirit, the Hallowing and Healing Influence of Pardon and Peace, through faith in the All-Atoning and Reconciling Mediation and Merits of JESUS CHRIST, and invoke the Purifying and Sanctifying Graces of THE HOLY SPIRIT to Work in us Amendment of Life, our repentance or sorrow is vain; we are still in our sins, and still out of the Pale of Salvation, having no benefit of CHRIST'S Passion, and no means within ourselves of Reconciliation with The FATHER of Heaven, Who, having Shewn us the Way of Life, cannot be Expected to Redeem us from the consequences of a wilful and perverse departure from It. Even the betrayal of The SON of Man would not have been a sin unto Death Eternal, had Judas, in the spirit of Christian sorrow and supplication, sought, through That Very Blood he caused to be Shed, Pardon at the Throne of DIVINE Mercy, and the Renewal of his Soul by a new birth unto Righteousness. In one respect even the example of Judas is worthy of imitation, that of the restitution of the bribe for his base and sordid treachery, the giving back the wages of sin: for how often is it that we feel sorrow for particular offences committed by us against the Laws of our CREATOR, since they press as a burden on our consciences; and yet how little studious are we to make what recompense even is in our power, that our sorrow may be productive of what, if consistently pursued, it would obtain for us, a change to joyfulness of heart, as knowing it had been Accepted of GOD for CHRIST'S Sake. Though the chief Priests and Elders had dealt with Judas as a Traitor, yet hard and callous indeed must have been their feelings not to have been touched with his avowed and practical recantation, which, at least, should have led them to pause and hesitate in the work of destruction, and which, if an error, would involve them in endless and irretrievable ruin; for here was a further testimony that, in the mind of Judas, JESUS was What He Laid Claim to be, and What both His Miracles and Precepts Manifested Him to be, The MESSIAH: but they were pertinaciously bent on the destruction of Him, Whose Life and Doctrines were a Condemnation of their pride and licentiousness.

The infatuation of vice and wickedness is truly surprising. The chief Priests were scrupulously observant of the Law, which proscribed the application of money, when the price of blood, to Spiritual purposes; but they removed from their minds the Injunction *not to shed innocent blood*. Both Pilate and Judas declared CHRIST Innocent; and though the Priests did not dispute the point with Judas, who was in their secret, yet would they not seek the reversal or even suspension of the Condemnation, but still thirsted for the Blood of The LAMB; though in the mockery of sanctity, they gave a charitable direction to the money, buying with it a place of sepulture for Strangers.

△ St. Matthew is the only One of the Evangelists, who, in the Gospel, notices this Transaction; but in the Acts of the Apostles (usually attributed to St. Luke,) it is thus confirmed: *In those days Peter stood up in the midst of the*

*Disciples, (the number assembled together were about one hundred and twenty,) and said, "Men and Brethren! This Scripture must needs have been Fulfilled, Which The HOLY GHOST, by the mouth of David, Spake before [Ps. xli, 9.] concerning Judas, which was Guide to them that took JESUS: for he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this Ministry: now this Man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity, and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out: and it was known unto all the Dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called, in their proper tongue, 'Aceldama,' that is to say, 'The Field of Blood.'"*—Acts i, 15 to 19.

It is, from hence, probable that the chief Priests and Elders had declared that the purchase was made by Judas himself, though the fact was otherwise. Also that Judas might have hung himself from some eminence, so as on the rope breaking by his weight, he might have fallen and been dashed to pieces; which would reconcile the two accounts. "*Better were it for that Man, if he had never been born!*" were the Words Prophetically Pronounced by The SON of Man, respecting him who should betray Him, even before that betrayal took place: but as it was Declared by The Same Infallible ORACLE to be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the Day of Judgment, than for some Sinners, so may it seem to be more tolerable for Judas amidst his imperfect repentance, than for the Scribes and Pharisees, who, in defiance of all Justice and all evidence, persecuted The SAVIOUR of the World unto Death; and who were, by their relentless obduracy, the occasion, in a degree, of the Self-destruction of Judas, whose crime they had superinduced, whilst Judas himself, in the phrenzy of despair, fled to the Maniac's refuge, but without a Maniac's relief. Amidst the persecuting rage that assailed the temporal David, Ahithophel sacrificed himself because his counsel, (which would have exterminated the defenceless Exile and his Kingly power, and established that of his Rebel Son,) was rejected: *for when Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he arose, and gat him home to his house, to his City, and put his household in order, and hanged himself, and died.*—2 Sam. xvii, 23. But Judas hanged himself because he had counselled wickedly against his LORD and KING, The Spiritual DAVID, and could not arrest its evil influence, or overthrow its effect.

Let us, from the history of Judas, not only guard our hearts against the vice of covetousness, but learn to make our repentance for our back-slidings and short-comings available to our Soul's peace, by resting on the Love and Mercy of CHRIST to Obtain for us The DIVINE Pardon and Reconciliation. The Prophecy, which was thus Fulfilled, is contained in the Book of Zechariah; but the Record of It made by the Prophet Jeremiah, as stated in the Text, it is presumed must be lost, as it does not appear in his Prophecies or Writings, which are still extant; for had St. Matthew, quoting from memory, mistaken the one Prophet from the other, it is probable that, upon a review, the mistake would have been discovered and rectified: the words too, as given by St. Matthew, professedly from Jeremiah, differ, though substantially they are, perhaps, the same. Under the veil of the generally figurative language of Prophecy, Zechariah, in allusion to the Office of MEDIATOR of a New Covenant of Peace and Reconciliation, Undertaken by CHRIST, through the Sacrifice of Himself, as a Shepherd for his flock, says, as from the Mouth of The MESSIAH, unto the People for the Consolation of the Poor of That Flock and the Strangers to the Covenant of Reconciliation, "*If ye think good, give Me My Price! and if not, forbear! So they weighed for My Price thirty pieces of Silver: and The LORD Said unto Me, 'Cast it unto the Potter:' a goodly Price, that I was prized at of them! And I Took the thirty pieces of silver, and Cast them to the Potter in the House of The LORD.*"—Zech. xi, 12, 13. In this we have an instance of the

latitude to be allowed in the interpretation of Prophetical Writings; for if the literal sense be considered, it might be inferred that the price was adequate to the object, whereas it cost more to Redeem the Souls of Men than it is in the power of Man or of Angels to conceive. And yet are there found Myriads of Human Beings, who, for thirty pieces of silver, have freely sacrificed their own Souls, and set at nought The LORD, That would have Bought them at the inestimable Cost of His Adopting their incarnate Nature; but they counted His Proffered Covenant of Peace and Reconciliation, though Ratified by His Blood, as nothing; and rather, in the fulness of their folly and in the spirit of idolatry, yielded their desires to that covetousness which prefers the finite gains of this World to the pure Pleasures of the Christian's hope and the Sure Treasures of a Christian's faith, and the unfailing Joys of a Heavenly Inheritance, That Passeth not away, Eternal in the Heavens.

△ And JESUS Stood before the Governor; and the Governor asked Him, saying, "*Art Thou the King of the Jews?*" And JESUS Said unto him, "*Thou sayest.*" And when He was accused of the chief Priests and Elders, He Answered nothing, Then said Pilate unto Him, "*Hearst thou not how many things they witness against thee?*" And He Answered him to never a word; insomuch that the Governor marvelled greatly.—11 to 14.

It should seem that the Roman Governor considered as an idle tale the accusation brought against JESUS, of His being *The SON of GOD*; but that he deliberated on the charge made against Him of claiming to be a *King*, since that might militate against the temporal supremacy of Cæsar, the Emperor of Rome, under whose government Judea had been brought by conquest, whom Pontius Pilate represented, and whose power the Latter was bound to support. The Answer Given by our SAVIOUR to the question, "*Art thou the King of the Jews?*" was Meant as an Affirmative One; but to be understood in a Spiritual Sense: and the following more explicit narrative of the Transaction, as given by St John, fully Shews that even Pilate himself did not understand CHRIST'S Assertion of Royalty as offered in opposition to Cæsar's dominion: *Then Pilate entered into the Judgment Hall again, and called JESUS, and said unto Him, "Art thou the King of the Jews?" JESUS Answered him, "Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did Others tell it thee of Me?" Pilate answered, "Am I a Jew? Thine own Nation and the chief Priests have delivered thee unto me; what hast thou done?" JESUS Answered, "MY KINGDOM is not of this World! If My KINGDOM were of this World, then would My Servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is My KINGDOM not from hence." Pilate, therefore, said unto Him, "Art thou a King then?" JESUS Answered, "Thou sayest That I am, A KING: to This End was I Born; and for This Cause Came I into the World, that I should Bear Witness unto the Truth! Every One, that is of the Truth, heareth My Voice." Pilate saith unto Him, "What is Truth?" And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, "I find in Him no fault at all!"—John xviii, 33 to 38.*

Here it obviously appears that, though CHRIST Owned Himself to be a KING, (for He is KING of Kings and LORD of Lords, and The Only RULER of Princes,) yet did He expressly Disclaim any visible temporal Sovereignty in the sense Pilate might have apprehended, Saying, "*My KINGDOM is not of this World: but now is My KINGDOM not from hence!*" HE Saw, in the comprehensive Range of OMNISCIENCE, all Principalities and Powers subservient to Him, and Himself finally acknowledged SUPREME over All from the foundation of the World: for David had truly said of Him, *THY KINGDOM is an Everlasting KINGDOM, and Thy DOMINION Endureth through-*

*out all Ages.* CHRIST is in the Spiritual World, what Truth is in the moral World, The FIRST and LAST, The BEGINNING and The ENDING; In All, Through All, and Over All: there is no limit to His Greatness, and no bound to His Power: All Creatures shall bow down before Him, and All the Host of Heaven do Him reverence. But in a Spiritual sense only is to be understood the assertion that, "*Now is His DOMINION not from hence:*" and by the Spiritually-minded only can this be rightly discerned. To the Soul, that fondly trusts in the Power of its REDEEMER to Bring Salvation to it at last, CHRIST Appears Arrayed in All The MAJESTY of HEAVEN; and even Death and Hell are Prophetically viewed as subject to His Mandate and Controul. The temporal power of Man and of Satan, may bruise and persecute unto death the body, but it is CHRIST Alone, to Whom all Power, both in Heaven and Earth, is Committed of The FATHER, Who can Cast both body and Soul into Hell, and there Everlastingly Confine them; and it is He Alone That can Say unto them, that acknowledge Him, in feeling as well as in profession, to be their LORD and KING, that He will Extend unto them the Blessing of His Interminable Reign as PRINCE of Peace. It is the consciousness of this Power, so Mercifully Put forth, as in the Sure Word of Scripture it is Promised on behalf of Those, who have faith Therein, that the heart truly rejoiceth; and such joy no Spirit of Malice or of Evil taketh away. May that Joy be ours! and so assuredly it will, if, whilst in this short probationary state on Earth, we are truly loyal towards our Heavenly KING. It was to be KING over the Spirits of all Flesh; to Reign in the heart of Man by faith unto obedience, that CHRIST Descended from the Inaccessible Glories, Which He had with the FATHER, to be Subservient, for a time, to the hour and power of Darkness, Suffering in His SPIRIT (Accustomed to the Peace of Heaven in Its most Extended and Exalted Character,) the very Pains of Hell, as having had heaped upon It the burden of the pollutions of a World's iniquities. That Pilate acquitted JESUS of all insurrectionary movement against the existing Government is clear from his declaration to the Jews: "*I find in Him no fault at all.*" CHRIST was without sin, neither was guile found in His Mouth. But it is not so with us; for who can say how oft he offendeth? but thanks be to GOD, Who hath Given us the Means of Redemption from suffering that punishment of sin, and hath Placed us in the way of attaining the purest Bliss, of which our Souls are susceptible, and that for ever and ever, through the accepted Mediation of The SON of His Love. St. Paul confirms the fact of this, our SAVIOUR'S Arraignment, and, as prefatory to it, puts forth the most seasonable and salutary admonition against the sin of covetousness, which led to it and to the destruction of its Votary Judas; and which will, in like manner, overwhelm in the end All, who yield themselves up as willing Victims to it: *Godliness with contentment* (says that Apostle,) *is great gain: for we brought nothing into this World, and it is certain we can carry nothing out: and having food and raiment, let us be therewith content! But they, that will be rich, fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown Men in destruction and perdition: for the love of money is the root of all evil; which while Some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.* But thou, (addressing himself to Timothy,) *O Man of GOD, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness! Fight the good fight of faith; lay hold on Eternal Life! whereunto thou art also Called, and hast professed a good profession before many Witnesses.* And the Apostle goes on to exhort to Christian conduct, and to proclaim, as in Blissful Prospect, the Glorious and Everlasting KINGDOM of The MESSIAH; and thus sums up his Pastoral Address: *I give thee charge in the Sight of GOD,*

*Who Quickeneth All Things, and before CHRIST JESUS, Who, before Pontius Pilate, Witnessed a Good Confession, that thou keep this Commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the Appearing of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, which, in His Times, He shall shew; Who is The Blessed and Only POTENTATE, The KING of Kings, and LORD of Lords! Who Only Hath Immortality, Dwelling in the Light, Which no Man can approach unto; Whom no Man hath seen, nor can see; to Whom be Honour and Power Everlasting!—1 Tim. vi, 6 to 16.* The Eternity of CHRIST'S KINGDOM had been long antecedently Proclaimed in the Prophet Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, (represented successively by the various parts of the Compound image shewn in the dream,) thus: *And in the days of These Kings shall The GOD of Heaven Set up A KINGDOM, Which shall never be destroyed; and The KINGDOM shall not be Left to other People; but It shall Break in pieces and Consume All these Kingdoms; and It shall Stand for Ever!—Dan. ii, 44.* And Again, in the revelation of his own vision, the declaration whereof was as follows: *I saw, in the night visions, and behold, ONE, Like The SON of Man, Came with the Clouds of Heaven, and Came to The ANCIENT of Days; and They brought Him near before Him: and there was Given Him Dominion and Glory and A KINGDOM, That all People, Nations, and Languages should serve Him: His Dominion is an Everlasting Dominion, Which shall not pass away; and His KINGDOM, That, Which shall not be destroyed.—Dan. vii, 13, 14.* But CHRIST'S KINGDOM is a Spiritual KINGDOM: and His Resistance of Satan's temptation is Recorded to shew that He Aimed not at temporal Sovereignty. It is expressly related of Him, that He actually Shunned the being proclaimed a King, when the Multitude, who had witnessed His Miracles, and said, *This is of a truth That PROPHET, Which should Come into the World,* were zealous to obtrude that imagined Honour upon Him: *When JESUS, therefore, Perceived that they would come and take Him by force to make Him a King, He Departed again into a Mountain Himself alone.—John vi, 14, 15.*

The Passages both in St. Mark and St. Luke corresponding with the Text, are, to the letter, nearly the same as the Text: *And Pilate asked Him, "Art Thou the King of the Jews?" And He Answering, Said unto him, "Thou sayest it!" And the chief Priests accused Him of many Things: but He Answered nothing: and Pilate asked Him again, saying, "Answerest thou nothing? Behold, how many things they witness against thee!" But JESUS yet Answered nothing: so that Pilate marvelled.—Mark xv, 2 to 5.*

△ In St. Luke's testimony to the same fact, a further Incident is Recorded, that of CHRIST'S being harassed and persecuted by a double judgment before the Jewish Governor of Galilee, as well as that of Jerusalem, and a further ground of accusation is thus stated: *And the whole Multitude of them arose, and led JESUS unto Pilate; and they began to accuse Him, saying, "We found this Fellow perverting the Nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, saying, 'That he himself is CHRIST, A KING!'" And Pilate asked Him, saying, "Art thou the King of the Jews?" And He Answered him, and Said, "Thou sayest It?" Then said Pilate to the chief Priests and to the People, "I find no fault in this Man!" And they were the more fierce, saying, "He stirreth up the People, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this Place." When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked "Whether the Man were a Galilean?" And as soon as he knew that He belonged unto Herod's jurisdiction, he sent Him to Herod, who himself also was at Jerusalem at that time. And when Herod saw JESUS, he was exceeding glad; for he was desirous of seeing Him of a long season, because he had heard many things of Him, and he hoped to have seen some Miracle Done by Him. Then he questioned with him in many words; but He*

*Answered him nothing. And the chief Priests and Scribes stood and vehemently accused Him: and Herod, with his Men of war, set Him at nought, and mocked Him, and arrayed Him in a gorgeous robe, and sent Him again to Pilate. And the same day Pilate and Herod were made Friends together: for before they were at enmity between themselves.*—Luke xxiii, 1 to 12.

The curiosity of Herod to see JESUS arose from the expectation of witnessing in Him something new, which, by its peculiarity, might amuse. It was neither a desire to fulfil his Office of Governor uprightly, nor to arrive at the knowledge of Truth, that were the motives to his desire and curiosity. And such thirst for novelty, and indifference to The One Thing Needful, unfortunately actuate but too Many of us at this day: amusement, rather than Spiritual improvement, is the too general object; a knowledge of the ways and ingenuity of Men, rather than the Ways and Loving-Kindness and Forbearance of GOD, is the prevailing pursuit. And both the Word of GOD and The Incarnate SON of GOD are scrutinized and examined with carnal, rather than with Spiritual, views; and often to find grounds of animadversion or disbelief. And again, That Word, if stored in the head, to win honour from Men, is not so laid to the heart in reverence as to produce the fruits of faith, and repentance unto amendment and holiness of life.

But it is from St. John alone that we have the full elucidation of the Answer Which our SAVIOUR finally did Give. Of the accusations made by the chief Priests and Elders CHRIST was as Regardless, when they were urged before Pilate, as He had been of those vented against Him in the high Priest's palace: and His Silence, notwithstanding the interest which Pilate, with an unusual degree of what he, probably, considered condescension, took in seeking the Acquittal of JESUS, might very naturally excite wonder in Pilate; and, according to St. John, Pilate, therefore, reasoned with JESUS on a Reserve so unlooked-for and, seemingly, so unseasonably Persevered in, saying, "*Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee; and have power to release thee?*" But JESUS Answered, "*Thou couldest have no power at all against Me except it were Given thee from Above! Therefore, he, that delivered Me unto thee, hath the greater sin.*"—Chap. xix, 10, 11.

The Purposes of GOD must be Fulfilled: but to the confusion of Fatalists it will be found that the Instruments He Selects for Those Purposes, in Their Fulfilment are, to all extent of responsibility, free Agents. This is among the Mysteries of DIVINE Power; and it is too deep for Human Reason to fathom; but All Scripture History teems with instances of Such Doctrine, and, as an act of faith, it is required of us Christians to assent to it. As CHRIST Withheld an Answer concerning His Real NATURE from Pilate, so unto Such as, with infidel propensities and pride of prejudice, scrutinize the Word of GOD, The SPIRIT of Wisdom cannot be Expected to Reveal Its Mysteries. Pilate appeared to respect CHRIST as Man; but sought not an answer to his inquiry with any purpose to honour Him as GOD

Now at that Feast the Governor was wont to release unto the People a Prisoner, whom they would: and they had then a notable Prisoner, called Barabbas; therefore, when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, "Whom will ye, that I release unto you? Barabbas? or Jesus, which is called CHRIST?" For he knew that for envy they had delivered Him. When he was set down on the Judgment seat, his Wife sent unto him, saying, "Have thou nothing to do with That Just Man! for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of Him." But the chief Priests and Elders persuaded the Multitude that they should ask Barabbas; and destroy JESUS. The Governor answered, and said unto them, "Whether of the Twain will ye that I release unto you?" They said, "Barabbas!" Pilate saith

unto them, "What shall I do then with Jesus, which is called CHRIST?" They All say unto him, "Let him be crucified!" And the Governor said, "Why, what evil hath he done?" But they cried out the more, saying, "Let him be crucified!" When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water and washed his hands before the Multitude, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of This just Person! See ye to it!" Then answered All the People, and said, "His blood be on us and on our Children!"—15 to 25.

*To Preach Liberty to the Captive, and the opening of the Prison to them that are bound,* Came CHRIST upon Earth: but Man, for whose benefit This Salvation was Intended, would not give liberty to Him, Who was the Ransom of Man's Soul, but forced Him from prison unto judgment, and from judgment unto the agony and ignominy of Crucifixion. As the feast of the Passover was the commemoration of The DIVINE Deliverance of the Israelites from Egyptian bondage; so though they were again under bondage, but with the privilege of following their religious pursuasion, the custom of the celebration was observed; and their temporal Governors, the Romans, so far yielded to their peculiarities as to give up to them, and restore to liberty, any one Prisoner of their choice, whatever was his offence. This was a feature in the National observance that was at once characteristic of the general Deliverance to which the Jews prophetically looked in the Advent of The MESSIAH; Who they vainly and arrogantly presumed would be (not their Spiritual SAVIOUR, for in the pride of their hearts they acknowledged not that they needed such Salvation, but) their temporal Deliverer, to advance them to Earthly glory and supremacy. But how blind and infatuated is Human counsel when uninfluenced by The SPIRIT of GOD! Their MESSIAH, with All the Qualities of A Heavenly Character, had Proclaimed His SOVEREIGNTY; but Declared *That His KINGDOM was not of this World*: at which their pride and prejudice revolted, and they would not have Such A KING to Reign over them; but in the violence of their opposition and jealousy thus invoked destruction on His Head.

With all the subtlety used by the Jews, it seems they could not disguise from Pilate the real motive for their persecuting rancour against JESUS; for Pilate discovered that *for envy they had delivered Him*.

Pilate washed his hands of the offence of condemning The JUST ONE and The TRUE, which the Descendants of the Chosen People of GOD, in the height of sacrilege and blasphemy, committed. And how often does the Spirit of Man, which is in him, commit offences against his MAKER, in desire at least, which through fear of Man and of Man's laws, he dare not realize in deed. How often are both the fear or the love of CHRIST urged on the conscience in vain, when the dread of Human censure or punishment operates to restrain the open commission of cruelty and injustice!

For near two thousand years the effect of this imprecation, of the Crucifixion-seeking Jews, *His Blood be on us, and on our Children!* has been felt by the Nation; left not only without a King, but without a Country; Exiles and Outcasts like the Descendants of Ishmael; ground down by oppression, and made the mock, the bye word of All; still continuing, amidst their sufferings and rejection, that spirit of pride and prejudice, which induces them to adhere to their fatal error and infidelity; manifesting the most degrading meanness, and surrendering themselves almost universally to the idolatry of covetousness; still perverting the sense and bearing of Those Prophecies, Which were Given to them that they might greet the Advent of The MESSIAH with ardent gratitude and holy love, and so gather peace to their Souls and exaltation Spiritually, and in the truest and most enduring sense, among the Nations of the Earth. To us, however, who seek no new Redeemer, but rest our hope in JESUS, as The

Promised and All-Fulfilling MESSIAH, The Incarnate SON of GOD, and that through Him and faith in His Mediation alone Cometh Salvation, it belongs to take especial care that, though we deny Him not with our lips, we do not crucify Him afresh by any unholiness of life or conversation, lest His Blood be as a Hand-Writing of Condemnation against us in the Great Day of Universal Judgment, when the Vengeance of The ALMIGHTY shall be Poured forth upon All, who shall have crucified The SON of GOD, either in His Body or His SPIRIT. The acts of Pilate should, in their violence and injustice, as respects The SAVIOUR'S Sufferings under his ordinance, be attributed to the Jews; for not only did he seek, almost even to solicitation, for the Release of JESUS, under a conviction of His innocence, but he was stimulated to that, though fruitless, interference and expostulation by the anxious solicitude of his Wife, who, yielding to the impression of a dream, urged Pilate to abstain from taking part in the condemnation, even at any hazard of his incurring the displeasure of the principal Jews, or endangering any popularity he might have among them. The Spirit of evil for the time prevailed, and the stony heart of the Jew weighed down the fleshy one of the Gentile. The hour, however, cometh, and even now is not far off, when the eyes of the Spiritually Blind shall be opened, and CHRIST shall be seen, not the Criminal at the bar of Pontius Pilate, but Himself The JUDGE of Quick and Dead, Extending Forgiveness to them that have erred ignorantly, and have not shut their eyes against the Communicated Light of DIVINE Truth: and, on the other hand, Visiting the hardened and impenitent Sinner with Retributive Justice awfully alarming in its contemplation, though infinitely beyond the widest range of our conception in its reality.

The narrative afforded us by St. Mark of this Part of our SAVIOUR'S Concluding History, is as follows: *Now at that Feast Pilate released unto the Jews one Prisoner, whomsoever they desired: and there was One named Barabbas, which lay bound with them, that had made insurrection with him, who had committed murder in the insurrection: and the Multitude, crying aloud, began to desire him to do, as he had ever done unto them. But Pilate answered them, saying, "Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews?" For he knew that the chief Priests had delivered Him for envy. But the chief Priests moved the People that he should rather release Barabbas unto them. And Pilate answered, and said again unto them, "What will ye then that I shall do unto him, whom ye call the King of the Jews?" And they cried out again, "Crucify him!" Then Pilate said unto them, "Why what evil hath he done?" And they cried out the more exceedingly, "Crucify him!" And so Pilate, willing to content the People, released Barabbas unto them; and delivered JESUS, when he had scourged Him, to be crucified.—Chap. xv, 6 to 15.* △

CHRIST was Accused of moving the People to sedition; and yet these very People seek for His Condemnation, Meek and Lowly as He was; and are clamorous for the pardon and liberation of a Man, who was not only guilty of sedition, but added to that offence the being an Accomplice in murder, and that too notwithstanding the express provision of their Mosaic Code, *That Whosoever sheddeth Man's blood, by Man shall his blood be shed.* And was not the Punishment of Crucifixion sufficient for The LAMB of GOD, without spot? but must He Give His Back also to the Smilers? Must the torture of the scourge precede a death so ignominious, so agonizing, and so painfully protracted? And was All This, and inconceivably More of Humiliation and of Suffering in The SPIRIT as well as in the Flesh, Necessary to Atone for our transgressions and our rebellion against The KING of Heaven, and to Seal the Covenant of our MAKER'S Reconciliation? And shall not the best sympathies and feelings of our hearts be roused at the recital Thereof?



St. Luke hath it thus: *And Pilate, when he had called together the chief Priests and the Rulers and the People, said unto them, "Ye have brought this Man unto me, as One that perverteth the People; and behold, I, having examined him before you, have found no fault in this Man, touching those things whereof ye accuse him! no, nor yet Herod; for I sent you to him: and lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him; I will therefore chastise him and release him;"* (for of necessity he must release One unto them at the Feast:) *and they cried out all at once, saying, "Away with this Man! and release unto us Barabbas;"* who, for a certain sedition made in the City and for murder, was cast into prison: *Pilate, therefore, willing to release JESUS, spake again to them. But they cried, saying, "Crucify him! crucify him!"* And he said unto them, the third time, *"Why what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him! I will therefore chastise him, and let him go."* And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that He might be crucified: and the voices of them and of the chief Priests prevailed. And Pilate gave sentence that it should be, as they required. And he released unto them him, that for sedition and murder was cast into prison; whom they had desired: but he delivered JESUS to their will.—Chap. xxiii, 13 to 25.

The power of Pilate was either circumscribed, or he had instructions to bend it to expediency; otherwise, from his sense of justice and from the earnestness with which he sought for the deliverance of JESUS, it is probable that the Jews would not have gained their point: still the conduct of Pilate seemed calculated to invite to calm and dispassionate consideration on the part of the Jews; and set an example of discriminating justice, which it behoved the Jews to follow: but envy had filled the hearts of the chief Priests and Jewish Rulers with infatuated prejudice and false pride, and left no room for the calls of Mercy or of Guidance to a Righteous judgment. To sacrifice the cause of Truth on mistaken motives, such as Pilate's, may be pardoned, though a sin; but to do it upon principles so corrupt as those of the chief Priests, can expect only Judgment without Mercy; for they have an accumulation of iniquity to answer for.

△ In the account derived from the remaining Evangelist we have a further confirmation of All the Material Circumstances of This most deeply Interesting and Affecting Part of our Blessed SAVIOUR'S History; it is as follows: *Pilate went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, "I find in him no fault at all: but ye have a custom, that I should release unto you One at the Passover: will ye, therefore, that I release unto you The King of the Jews?"* Then cried they all again, saying, *"Not this Man, but Barabbas!"* now Barabbas was a Robber. Then Pilate, therefore, took JESUS and scourged Him. Pilate went forth again, and saith unto them, *"Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know I find no fault in him."* When the chief Priests, therefore, and Officers saw Him, they cried out, saying, *"Crucify him! Crucify him!"* Pilate saith unto them, *"Take ye him, and crucify him! for I find no fault in him."* The Jews answered him, *"We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself The SON of GOD."* When Pilate, therefore, heard that saying, he was the more afraid, and went again into the Judgment Hall, and sought to release JESUS: but the Jews cried out, *"If thou let this Man go, thou art not Cæsar's Friend! Whosoever maketh himself a King, speaketh against Cæsar."* When Pilate, therefore, heard that saying, he brought JESUS forth, and sat down in the Judgment Seat, in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha: and it was the preparation of the Passover, and about the sixth hour; and he saith unto the Jews, *"Behold your King!"* But they cried out, *"Away with him! away with him! crucify him!"* Pilate saith unto them, *"Shall I crucify your King?"* The chief Priests answered, *"We have no King but Cæsar."*

*Then delivered he Him, therefore, unto them to be crucified: and they took JESUS, and led Him away.*—John xviii, 38 to 40; xix, 1. 4. 6 to 9. 12 to 16.

Pilate's subserviency to the Popular clamour, in disregard to the dictate of his conscience and the conviction of his reason, shews to what vain refuges the Natural Man is driven; and, as instanced in a Heathen, may be an occasion to the Christian heart for commiserating the darkness of the Heathen mind. But where the fulness of Gospel Light has Shone forth, That Guidance to all Truth, Conscience, as the Voice or Echo of DIVINE Revelation, should be listened to with intensesness and obeyed without hesitation. If rightly impressed with a sense of the Power and Presence of The DEITY, and the duty we owe Him, and the interest we have in seeking His Honour before all the Kings and Potentates of the Earth, (for in their highest glory they are but Creatures of His Sufferance, and dependant on His Will,) we should ever cherish a holy fear of Him, and study to obey His Will, however it may militate against the voice or will of the World.

St. John speaks of Barabbas as a Robber, varying in that description from the other Evangelists; but he may have been a Robber, before he became a Leader of sedition and an Actor in a murderous affray. The account of the other Gospel Writers is confirmed by St. Peter, who, in his address to the Jews on the miraculous cure of the impotent Man, said, *The GOD of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, The GOD of our Fathers hath Glorified His SON JESUS, Whom ye delivered up, and denied Him in the Presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let Him go: but ye denied The HOLY ONE and The JUST; and desired a Murderer to be granted unto you; and killed The PRINCE of Life.*—Acts iii, 12 to 15. Thus did this same Peter, who himself had thrice denied This Same JESUS, from the apprehension of sharing His Punishment, accuse, at the hazard of persecution unto death, the Jews of having denied Him, Whom Peter thus, virtually avowed to be The True MESSIAH, The Way, The Life, and The Truth. Such is the influence of Vital Faith, and such its necessity to bring us, through repentance, unto newness of Life, and fit us for Salvation and the Exalted Purity and Holiness that attend it. And what, through the fervency of supplication, Peter obtained, to the everlasting joy of his Soul, GOD is ever Ready and Willing to Grant by the Power of The SPIRIT, and for the Sake of His SON, unto All, who, in faithfulness of Spirit, pray for it.

Though not himself a Jew, Pilate, it seems, had learnt some of their customs, and being amongst Jews, he, on this occasion, virtually adopted one of those customs, by washing his hands before them in assertion of his innocency in giving judgment, that the Life-Blood of the Immaculate JESUS should be shed. For by the Mosaic law it was provided that *if One be found slain lying in the field, and it be not known who hath slain him, the Elders and Judges of the City, which is next unto the slain Man, shall take an heifer, and bring it down unto a rough valley, and shall strike off the heifer's neck there; and all the Elders of that City shall wash their hands over the heifer that is heheaded in the Valley; and they shall answer and say, "Our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen it. Be Merciful, O LORD, unto Thy People Israel, whom Thou hast Redeemed; and lay not innocent blood unto Thy People of Israel's charge!" And the blood shall be Forgiven them: so shalt thou put away the guilt of innocent blood from among you, when thou shalt do that which is right in the Sight of The LORD.*—Deut. xxi, 1. 3, 4. 6 to 9. It was probably, at least, in allusion to this custom or rite that Pilate acted on this occasion; but, at all events, his conduct was calculated to awaken in the Jews a recollection of the enormity and fearful responsibility of knowingly shedding *innocent blood*; when the blood of innocence ignorantly shed required to be atoned for by so solemn a sacrifice and

purification. But neither precept nor example hath influence over a mind sold to do evil, whether the price reach it in the gratification of envy or of avarice. *The Appointment of the Cities of Refuge* was, that blood, innocently shed, should not be upon the Children of the Land of Promise: [Deut. xix, 10.] and in other parts of the Old Testament, the Denunciation of DIVINE Vengeance on the Shedders of innocent blood is figured by the expression, *his blood be upon your head!* [as in 1 Kings ii, 32; 2 Sam. i, 16.] But loud as were the chief Priests and Elders in calling for the Blood of JESUS, and daring The DIVINE Judgment on the Righteousness of that call, before It was Shed, yet after It was Spilt, and the People began to believe that He, Who had been Crucified and Slain, was The LORD of Life and The True MESSIAH, their tone was altered, and they say unto the Apostles, *Ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this Man's blood upon us.*—Acts v, 28. Such is the inconsistency to which the support of a bad cause is often driven.

△ Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged JESUS, he delivered Him to be crucified. Then the Soldiers of the Governor took JESUS into the Common Hall, and gathered unto him the whole Band of Soldiers; and they stripped Him, and put on Him a scarlet robe: and when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon His Head, and a reed in His Right Hand; and they bowed the knee before Him, and mocked Him, saying, "Hail! King of the Jews!" and they spit upon Him, and took the reed, and smote Him on the Head. And after that they had mocked Him, they took the robe off from Him, and put His Own Raiment on Him, and led Him away to crucify Him.—26 to 31.

The scourging of JESUS had been foretold above 700 years before He Came in the Flesh to Give *His Back to the Smiters*: but the Prophet, who, as the Appointed Instrument of The HOLY SPIRIT, proclaimed It, mixed, with Tidings so calculated to raise in us Self-condemnation from the part we all have in the sins that made Such Suffering necessary, the blessed hope of the Punishment, so justly due for our sins, being Thereby Graciously Expiated: for of CHRIST, speaks the Prophet, when he says, *HE was Wounded for our transgressions; He was Bruised for our iniquities; the Chastisement of our Peace was upon Him; and with His Stripes we are Healed.*—Isa. liii, 5.

The Meek and Lowly JESUS, so Opposite in Manner to the despotic and commanding air of an Earthly King, being represented to the Soldiery by the Jews as arrogating that title, was thereby made a subject of sport and derision to them; and they seem, indeed, to have given vent to this disposition to mockery and scorn, in a wanton and most unfeeling way. But from an idle and dissolute and uninstructed assemblage of Soldiers, amidst the darkness of Paganism, such conduct does not so strike with astonishment, as does that of Those, who, in the full Light of Revealed Religion, profanely ridiculed Him, to Whom All their Prophets bore witness, and Who Came, Bringing the Offer of Eternal Salvation to All, who had faith in Him. But though Fools make a mock of sin, even of such sin as called for death on The LORD of Life, be it remembered that GOD also will Mock, when, at the Day of Universal Judgment, *their fear will awfully arise*, and no SAVIOUR will then Take their sins upon Him.

The description given of this by St. Mark is as follows: *And the Soldiers led JESUS away into the Hall, called Prætorium; and they called together the whole Band; and they clothed Him with purple, and platted a crown of thorns and put it about His Head, and began to salute Him, "Hail! King of the Jews!" And they smote Him on the Head with a reed, and did spit upon Him, and, bowing their knees, worshipped Him: and when they had mocked Him, they took off the purple from Him, and put His Own Clothes on Him, and led Him out to crucify Him.*—Chap. xv, 16 to 20.

With the exception of the difference of the colour of the robe, these accounts are completely in unison; and such a difference on a point so immaterial, strengthens the credibility of the general narrative. But if instances of the horrid cruelties practised by Man towards his Fellow-Man, did not continually arise before our eyes, it would hardly be conceived that such wanton cruelty, on the very threshold of a painful, lingering, and ignominious death, should be used towards the Object of such condemnation. To Angels, who viewed the act from Heaven, what amazement must have arisen at witnessing the desperate impiety of the Men, and the Merciful Forbearance of their GOD; and to the eye of pious contemplation, what a contrast is presented in the Benign and Patient and Forgiving Countenance of our SAVIOUR, and the rude unhallowed blasphemous grimaces of the rabble Soldiery, and the malignant looks of the stimulating Priests around Him. How altered will be the appearance of the Latter and of All, who, like them, have lightly esteemed The HOLY ONE of Israel, when CHRIST shall be Enrobed with All The MAJESTY of HEAVEN, and all Kings and People and Nations and Tribes shall bow before Him. St. Luke, as before stated, makes this mockery of CHRIST by the Soldiery to have occurred after His Arraignment before Herod; and is less minute in particularising it, saying only, *And Herod, with his Men of war, set Him at nought, and mocked Him, and arrayed Him in a gorgeous robe, and sent Him again to Pilate.*—Luke xxiii, 11.

St. John's narrative is thus: *Then Pilate, therefore, took JESUS and scourged Him. And the Soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on His Head; and they put on Him a purple robe, and said, "Hail! King of the Jews!" and they smote Him with their hands. Pilate, therefore, went forth again, and saith unto them, "Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him." Then Came JESUS forth, Wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, "Behold The Man!"*—Chap. xix, 1 to 5. △

The order of the Incidents is here somewhat varied from the accounts of Matthew and Mark; but the Incidents themselves are precisely agreed upon; and a feature of peculiar beauty and interest in the Description is added, namely, Pilate's pointing to JESUS with a look expressive of a conviction of His Innocence and of a desire that the Jews should contemplate His Countenance, as, doubtless, equally Full of Dignity as of Meekness: "*Behold The Man!*" And, indeed, What A Man was then Present to view! In His Countenance must have Beamed all the Graces of Wisdom, Holiness, and Spiritual Love: the Body's Sufferings impaired not the Soul's Beauty; for though thorns pierced His Temples, and reeds bruised His Flesh, and thongs had lacerated His Back, yet His SPIRIT was Full of Heavenly Charity: and by the Meekness and Magnanimity conspicuous on His Brow, He could not but have Looked A King; yea, More than a King: though His Brethren after the Flesh, and whom He Came to Rule in Righteousness and Establish in Glory, refused to pay Him reverence.

*Behold The Man! Every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: for, behold, He Cometh with Clouds; and all Kindreds of the Earth shall wail because of Him!* But let us in Spirit behold Him as He is, The Man, CHRIST JESUS, The Only BEGOTTEN of The FATHER, Full of Grace and Truth; and let us pay Him the outward and the inward homage of His Saints, lest He Hide, as it were, His Face from us, when the absence of His Favour will sink into interminable misery; for *He, Who, for the Salvation and Sanctification of penitent Believers, Gave His Back to the Smiters, and His Cheeks to them that plucked off the hair, Who Hid not His Face from shame and spitting, will Call,*

with the Sounding of the Archangel's Trump, all the Generations of the Earth before Him; and then even the Best and Holiest of the Assembly shall be awe-struck before His Power and Glory; whilst they, who have offended against His DIVINE MAJESTY, shall be confounded and cast into utter despair, calling, but in vain, *on the Rocks to fall on them and on the Mountains to cover them*. But the Vengeance of Incensed DEITY will then be Uplifted over them, and no INTERCESSOR will then Appear for them to Appease That Vengeance or to Stay Its Fury: Since CHRIST, Who would have Rejoiced to Plead for their Pardon, having been disdainfully rejected by them in the Season of His Mediatorial Offering, will then be their JUDGE; and in His Judgment upon them, DIVINE Justice, without the Meed of Mercy, must Take Its Course.

Isaiah had prophetically described this Part of our SAVIOUR'S History, saying, *He was Taken from Prison and from Judgment*: [Isa. liii, 8.] and we have seen Him Led from the Judgment Hall to be scornfully intreated, and to be finally persecuted to death. With such feelings as actuated the Inspired Prophet, when revealing thus the Sufferings of Man's Only REDEEMER, may we be impressed, when reading and meditating on Their detailed History! and, trembling at the part we have taken in our past Lives, by which Those Sufferings were aggravated, may we glorify Him, by Whose Blood our Pardon may be Sealed, and our Souls Exalted, through a lively faith, unto Eternal Holiness and Purity and Joy.

△ And as they came out they found a Man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear His Cross. And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull, they gave Him vinegar to drink, mingled with gall: and when He had Tasted thereof He would not Drink. And they crucified Him; and parted His Garments, casting lots: that It might be Fulfilled, Which was spoken by the Prophet, "They parted My Garments among them; and upon My Vesture did they cast lots." And, sitting down, they watched Him there: and set up over His Head His accusation written, "This is JESUS, The KING of the Jews!" Then were there two Thieves crucified with Him; One on the right hand, and Another on the left. And they, that passed by, reviled Him, wagging their heads, and saying, "Thou, that destroyest the Temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself! If Thou be The SON of GOD, come down from the Cross!" Likewise also the chief Priests mocking Him, with the Scribes and Elders, said, "He saved Others, himself he cannot save! If he be The KING of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him: he trusted in GOD; let Him Deliver him now, if He will Have him! For he said, 'I am The SON of GOD.'" The Thieves also, which were crucified with Him, cast the same in His Teeth.—32 to 44.

From The Gospel according to St. John, compared with the Text and with the other two Evangelists, it may be inferred that, in the first instance, CHRIST was Forced to Carry His Cross Himself; but, that after a time, Oppressed, doubtless, with its weight, and Weakened by His Sufferings, a limit was put to such wanton Persecution; the Soldiery interposing between the relentless malice of the Jews and the Patient Endurance of JESUS, and meeting a Cyrenian Traveller, compelled him to take the cross and bear it to its destination.

The corresponding descriptions from the other Evangelists are thus: *And they compel one Simon, a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the Father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear His Cross.*—Mark xv, 21. *And as they led Him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after JESUS.*—Luke xxiii, 26. *And they took JESUS, and led Him away: and He, Bearing His Cross, Went forth.*—John xix, 16, 17.

It is, at all Events, probable, that JESUS was first made to Carry the Cross, All around Him, malignantly or inhumanly, refusing the office: and but for the

arrival of One, (who was connected with Two of the Disciples of JESUS, and, therefore, his reluctance, which was overcome, arose from a very different feeling; he did not like to be even innocently instrumental to the Execution; and yet could not but justify to himself the act, as tending to ease the immediate Sufferings of his Sons' adored MASTER,) JESUS might have had to Labour on with it.

It was the custom of the Jews to let the sentences of death be executed out of the bounds of the City; in analogy to the sacrifice of atonement, as illustrated by the Inspired Writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, who, in the course of his elaborate argument with his Countrymen, states, that *the bodies of those beasts, whose blood was brought into the Sanctuary by the high Priest for sin, were burned without the Camp*: [Lev. xvi. 27.] *wherefore JESUS also, that He might Sanctify the People with His Own Blood, Suffered without the gate.* And the Writer takes occasion from thence to offer an admonition, which we shall do well to follow, saying, *Let us go forth, therefore, unto JESUS without the Camp, bearing His Reproach! for here have we no continuing City; but we seek One to come. By Him, therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise to GOD continually, that is, the fruit of our lips; giving thanks to His Name!*—Heb. xiii. 11 to 15.

Simon was compelled, by the Persecutors of CHRIST, to bear the Cross of CHRIST, and follow Him to Calvary; but we are Invited, by CHRIST, to take up our cross and follow Him through the Spiritual Calvary; having the Promise, if we faint not and fail not in faith, of arriving at That City, the Heavenly Jerusalem, Which shall Continue for ever and ever, having CHRIST, The Power of GOD and The Glory of GOD, for Its Light, and All The MAJESTY of GOD for Its Grandeur and Its Beauty.

Malice seems to have exercised all its ingenuity in the persecution of The SAVIOUR of the World, that Satan might exult in that his hour, and in the power of darkness, when The SON of Man was Delivered up to that power; nor is this so much to be wondered at: but that Man should so outrage the best feelings of his nature, and torture The Acknowledged AUTHOR of So Much Good, as His Miracles of Healing had Manifested, is truly amazing; that Jews, the Chosen People of GOD, to whom alone the Promise of A MESSIAH was Made by immediate Revelation from GOD, should so, in the wantonness of cruelty, deal with That MESSIAH, when He did Come in Meekness and in Mercy, is indeed a miracle; and that when Faint and Wary, amidst the imminent apprehension of Crucifying tortures, when He Looked for Comforters, He should Find None; and, when Hungry and Athirst, should have had administered unto Him, instead of the cup of consolation, vinegar mingled with gall, being on DIVINE Record, must, therefore, be believed: otherwise the very Spirits of Hell, One might have thought, could hardly have invented, and still less inflicted, cruelty of such varied and exquisite Suffering; and yet with This did The HOLY SON of The MOST HIGH Bear without a Murmur. The very literal Fulfilment of the Prophecy of David, as to the appropriation of the different Garments of CHRIST, is remarkable; and the more so, as the passage in the xxii Psalm, where it appears, is not followed immediately by any allusion to the sacrifice of the Body, Which those Garments covered, though the Psalm opens with the Words Used by our SAVIOUR on the Cross; and in other parts of it has reference to Occurrences that took place at the Crucifixion. The act of watching CHRIST demonstrates the suspicion, that continually obtruded itself upon their minds, that He was not the Blasphemer they declared Him to be: and it evinced an apprehension of the possibility of The DIVINE Power being Exemplified in Him. But thus it is, that we do not make Friends of our fears, by making them the sources of supplication for Wisdom from Above.

The superscription of Pilate over the Head of JESUS, was written by him in the spirit of faith, that He was, or Deserved to be, *The King of the Jews*: but the Jews, in reading it, chose not to give it that plain and literal construction, but interpreted it as containing *the accusation*, on which CHRIST'S Condemnation proceeded, and for which He Suffered. And so it is that, when the heart is bent on evil, the understanding is made its miserable Slave, and is all things to all Men, that by its means it may gain its iniquitous end; the Word of GOD even being tortured to serve the purposes of Satan.

△ The SON of The MOST HIGH GOD Came down from Heaven, and not only Took upon Him the form of Man, but Communicated with the Despised and Sinful of Mankind; and even in His Death was ranked as well as Numbered with *Transgressors*. But with the Pure all things are pure; and to the everlasting confusion of all Spiritual pride and Self-assumed righteousness, in the Day of Universal Judgment *Thieves and Harlots*, through the influence of humility and penitence and faith, will be found entering into *The KINGDOM of HEAVEN* by the Door, Which CHRIST'S Mediation has Opened to them: when the proud and Self-approving Pharisee, and Such as he, will, in vain, seek for such admission; and, on the contrary, will have their portion in the regions of darkness and endless despair.

The same horrid system of persecution was continued whilst our Blessed SAVIOUR was Suffering the Double Torment of Excruciating Thirst and Agonizing Pain from His Wounds and loss of Blood: Great, however, as were Those Bodily Trials, His Compassionate SPIRIT must have Endured even more Trying Anguish at Contemplating, Prophetically, the misery of those Myriads upon Myriads of Immortal Souls of Mankind, from the beginning to the ending of this World, who, with the Means of Everlasting Happiness Set before them, will have no part or lot Therein, from having, through their profligacy, haughtiness, and impenitence, forfeited the Boon of Salvation, and rejected The MEDIATOR'S Offers of Love. Such are they, who, instead of resorting to prayer, that, ere too late, their understandings might be Enlightened by DIVINE Grace, and their hearts amended by DIVINE Counsel, and the evil of their past ways be made manifest to them, that they may be Rescued from the guilt of the great transgression, even the offence of Crucifying afresh The LORD of Life and Eternal Glory, walk on still in their wickedness, and impiety.

The Jews, in their malignity, not only misquoted the Words of our SAVIOUR, but gave a gross misconstruction of Their Tendency; urging the Multitude around to believe that He Contemplated the destruction of the Temple. But though He did not so Use the Threat, or Develope the Prediction, we shall afterwards see, that in the same instant in which His SPIRIT Departed from His Body, the Veil of the Temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom, and though, on the Resurrection of His Body after three days, the Temple was not as instantaneously restored to its pristine state, yet hence was confirmed the persuasion that *CHRIST Spoke not of the Temple made with hands, but of His Own Body*, as, indeed the Repository of Truth, of Righteousness, and Perfect Holiness: and in the *Resurrection of That Body*, He Executed What He Declared *He had Power to Do*.

Out of their own mouths may these reviling and persecuting and hypocritical chief Priests be condemned; for they acknowledged that CHRIST *had Saved Others* by Means which they impliedly admitted to be miraculous: but instead of hailing So Great A BENEFactor, and inquiring earnestly, by an examination of The Scriptures, how these things could be? unless GOD were in Him or with Him; they think only of overthrowing His Power and Influence, as hostile to that which they themselves had assumed and exercised over the minds of Men,

through the perversion or misinterpretation of Those Scriptures by their traditions : and, in the blindness of their infatuation, heeded not that the very means, they thus sought as a support to their authority, would, in the end, prove instrumental to its and their own destruction. They owned that JESUS *Trusted in GOD*; and yet they professed that, for the Sake of GOD, and in obedience only to the Law of GOD, they condemn Him; not, at the same time, examining their own hearts to see how little of the love of GOD, and how much of the *love of the World, which is enmity with GOD*, were in them.

The Infidelity of the Thieves, when smarting under the power of the Law, and seeing Him, Who had been unknown to them before, and of Whom, perhaps, they, for the first time had heard, *in the same condemnation with themselves*, is only natural; but though expressions of derision burst forth from One of them, it seems that, ultimately at least, the Other, conscious of the justice of his own sentence, yet, reflecting on the unwarrantableness of the punishment inflicted upon CHRIST, checked his Companion's upbraidings, and, having surrendered his heart to the singleness and simplicity of the faith, as it is in JESUS, when contemplated in His Twofold Character as SON of GOD and SON of Man, and regarding Him as the Means of Pardon and Reconciliation for his Immortal Soul in its approaching appearance at the Judgment Seat of An Almighty and Omniscient GOD, he addressed JESUS, doubtlessly, from the heart, in terms of humble and adoring supplication, and was Blessed, in consequence, with an Assurance, Which even amidst the torturing pangs of his Body, must have Given to his Soul, in the Gracious Answer he received, a Peace and Consolation which made him triumph over Death and the Powers of Darkness and of Hell, in the expectancy of entering so instantaneously upon the unspeakable Joys of Heavenly Communion.

The description given by St. Mark of the Events next recorded in the Text, is as follows: *And they bring JESUS unto the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, the place of a skull; and they gave Him to drink, wine mingled with myrrh: but He Received it not. And when they had crucified Him, they parted His Garments, casting lots upon them, what every Man should take. And it was the third hour, and they crucified Him. And the superscription of His accusation was written over, "The KING of the Jews." And with Him they crucify two Thieves; the One on His Right Hand, and the Other on His Left. And the Scripture [Isaiah liii, 12.] was Fulfilled, Which Saith, "And He was Numbered with the Transgressors." And they, that passed by, railed on Him, wagging their heads, and saying, "Ah! thou, that destroyest the Temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself, and come down from the cross!" Likewise also the chief Priests, mocking, said among themselves with the Scribes, "He saved Others, himself he cannot save! Let CHRIST, the King of Israel, Descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe!" And they, that were crucified with Him, reviled Him.—Chap. xv, 22 to 32.*

The two Evangelists differ as to the liquor offered to CHRIST: the other two Evangelists only notice the subsequent offering to Him of vinegar, when He Cried out in the agonies of expiring nature. St. Mark may have given it the name of wine, though it might have been no better than vinegar; and myrrh is a bitter, though an aromatic one. St. Mark refers to the Prophecy of Isaiah which bespoke the Associates of CHRIST; and this also is referred to, as we shall see by St. Luke: *HE was numbered with the Transgressors*: and the Prophet adds, *and He Bare the sins of Many, and Made Intercession for the Transgressors.*—Isa. liii, 12. Whether in the interpretation of this Passage so limited an application may be made of the word *Transgressors*, as to confine it to those, with whom He was Executed, instead of extending it to Sinners of all



generations, who turn unto Him in penitence and faith, as we contend, may be questionable; but if considered as restricted to His Fellow-Sufferers on His Crucifixion, it affords us an instance of what St. Paul has declared, in the conviction of a lively faith, that *to die with CHRIST is Gain*; and thence also we see how, from the narrowness of our intellectual vision and the misconceptions of Human judgment, That is oftentimes most contributing to our Spiritual and Eternal Good, which we are too apt to deprecate; a separation of our attachment to the World and the things of the World, and a dedication of our heart and Soul to CHRIST and Him Crucified, so as gladly to take up our cross and follow Him. In the consciousness of our ignorance, as not knowing even what to pray for aright, we should teach ourselves to be humble, and to pray with the Spirit, as in the Words of CHRIST, saying, each of us, *FATHER, into Thy Hands I commend my Spirit!*—Luke xxiii, 46; Ps. xxxi, 5.

St. Luke gives a most beautiful and affecting Addition to this part of our SAVIOUR'S History, by introducing the pathetic Address, Which He Made to the Women, who followed Him with their lamentations and sympathy to Mount Calvary: *And there followed JESUS a great Company of People, and of Women, which also bewailed and lamented Him: but JESUS, Turning unto them, Said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for Me; but weep for yourselves, and for your Children! For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, 'Blessed are the Barren and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck!' Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall on us!' and to the hills, 'Cover us!' For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" And there were also two Other, Malefactors, led with Him to be put to death. And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified Him, and the Malefactors. One on the right hand, and the Other on the left. Then Said JESUS, "FATHER, Forgive them, for they know not What they do!" And they parted His Raiment and cast lots. And the People stood beholding; and the Rulers also, with them, derided Him, saying, "He saved Others, let him save himself if he be CHRIST, The Chosen of GOD!" And the Soldiers also mocked Him, coming to Him and offering Him vinegar, and saying, "If thou be the King of the Jews, save thyself!" And a superscription also was written over Him in letters of Greek and Latin and Hebrew, "THIS is The KING of the Jews!" And One of the Malefactors, which were hanged, railed on Him, saying, "If thou be CHRIST, save thyself and us!" But the Other, answering, rebuked him, saying, "Dost not thou fear GOD, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? and we, indeed, justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but This Man hath done nothing amiss." And he said unto JESUS, "LORD, Remember me, when Thou Comest into Thy KINGDOM!" And JESUS Said unto him, "Verily, I Say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise!"*—Chap. xxiii, 27 to 43.

In other respects there is here much additional Matter to interest and instruct. Amongst the Followers of JESUS to the place of His Crucifixion, and in the hour of the apparent abandonment of Him by both GOD and Man, Women were found, who manifested forth the fervour of their faith in Him and their devoted attachment to Him, Who had been unto them more than Husband or Brother. But JESUS, in the Immensity of His Love for the Human Race, so little Regarded His Own Sufferings, that He even Checked the disposition in Others to bewail Them; and strove to Divert the current of those lamentations from Himself to the awfully impending Fate of Jerusalem and its infatuated Inhabitants, as the Foreknown Effect of The DIVINE Vengeance Executed on their infidelity. In the Spirit of Prophecy our SAVIOUR Declared to them, that a time would come, when Desolation should lay Jerusalem in heaps; and such Chastisement would overtake its rebellious and impious Children, as should

make the childless Woman's condition enviable in comparison with hers, whose feelings of anguish would be enlarged by the engines of misery and destruction, war, pestilence, rapine, and famine, inflicting their evils upon her helpless and innocent Offspring, as well as on herself, in their remorseless sweep. In that desolating Visitation of DIVINE Wrath the consciousness of apostacy would drive every offending Soul to despair, and impel All to seek for concealment upon any terms from the impending destruction; to invoke the towering eminences around them to lift up their bases and cover them, [see the observations on a similar passage in Matthew xxiv, 19,] as foretold by Isaiah: *They shall go into the holes of the rocks and into the caves of the Earth, for fear of The LORD and for the Glory of His MAJESTY, when He Ariseth to Shake Terribly the Earth.*—Chap. ii, 19. These Words, Used by our SAVIOUR, are precisely Those contained in the Prophecy of Hosea, where Israel is reprov'd and threatened for her impiety and idolatry: *The thorn and the thistle (says he,) shall come up on their altars; and they shall say to the Mountains, "Cover us!" and to the Hills, "Fall on us!"*—Hosca x, 8. The same figurative expression is used by St. John, where he describes, as present to his Spiritual view, the dismay of the Wicked, when the World has reached its end, and its wicked Inhabitants, whether *Kings of the Earth, or great Men, or rich Men, or chief Captains, or mighty Men, or Bondmen, or Freemen, hide themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains, and say to the Mountains and Rocks, "Fall on us, and hide us from the Face of Him, That Sitteth on The Throne, and from the Wrath of The LAMB; for the Great Day of His Wrath is Come! and who shall be able to stand?"*—Rev. vi, 15 to 17. If temporal judgment beget such despondency and grief, when overtaking the Guilty towards their Fellow-Men, what will be the Effect of the Irreversible and Eternal Judgment of Condemnation Delivered by CHRIST Himself in His Spiritual KINGDOM against the Souls of All, who have rebelled against GOD, rejected the Covenant of Salvation, and done despite to The SPIRIT of Grace!!

This Prayer of our Blessed REDEEMER for His Persecutors, "*FATHER, Forgive them! For they know not what they do:*" Uttered amidst insult and mockery, when under accumulated Torture, is the Climax of Benevolence: It is an Exemplification of One of the most Prominent Characteristics in the Christian System: not only to *bear no malice nor hatred in the heart, but even to love our Enemies; to bless them, that curse us; to do good to them, that hate us; and to pray for them, which despitefully use and persecute us;* and all this with a sincere desire, and every effort in our power towards their conversion from the error of their ways, and their being brought, by penitence and faith, within the Pale of Eternal Salvation. This had been previously the Injunction of our SAVIOUR on His Disciples, and the Precepts He so Delivered, He thus Exemplarily Illustrated. *The CHOSEN of GOD*, an expression used by the infidel Priesthood, was but Another Name for "The SON of GOD," or "The MESSIAH," and Meant, that to That Character they professed to look, when they discovered It, for the Redemption of Israel and the Salvation of the World.

The superscription is not described by St. Luke as the accusation; but is mentioned without any accompanying remark.

Another feature in the narrative, peculiar to the Evangelist Luke, is the Conversation between our SAVIOUR, whilst on the Cross, and the Thieves that were executed with Him: One of them only, in the first instance at least, (and he seems to have been afterwards silenced, if not convinced, by the reasoning of the Partner of his guilt, as well as of his punishment,) railed against CHRIST, the Other respected Him for His Innocence and unmerited Suffering, and under the Influence of Inspiration, Operating on a heart softened to con-

fession and a sense of righteousness, burst forth in an act of worship, which, springing from a heart that had faith to be Saved, procured for itself the Full and Blessed Assurance of Salvation. The Declaration of our SAVIOUR Affords a powerful argument in favour of the Immortality of the Soul, and in the instant of its separation by Death from the body, of its immediate susceptibility of joy or sorrow in the contemplation of the Everlasting Destiny awaiting it at the Final Judgment: "*To day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise.*" And does any One among us know that "To-day" will not, by one of all the various accidents to which our nature is liable, terminate existence here, and effectuate that separation of body and Soul, which shall place the latter, ere the day is ended, or to-morrow's sun has risen, either in darkness more deep in gloom than the tomb, and in a despair beyond all experience of it on Earth; or with CHRIST in Paradise, in the Blessed Assurance of an endless Life in His Presence and under His Favour, Where there are Joys of a nature equally Perfect and Permanent, as Almighty Power and Wisdom and Goodness can Render them? and who should not, therefore, in every hour of life, say in spirit, with the repenting and believing Thief, when crucifying, even unto death, with CHRIST, and in equal penitence and faith, *LORD, Remember me when Thou Comest into Thy KINGDOM!*

The account which St. John has left us is as follows: *And JESUS, Bearing His Cross, Went forth into a place, called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew, Golgotha, where they crucified Him, and two Other with Him; on either side One, and JESUS in the midst. And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the Cross, and the writing was, "JESUS of Nazareth, The KING of the Jews!" This Title then read Many of the Jews; for the place, where JESUS was Crucified, was nigh to the City; and it was written in Hebrew and Greek and Latin. Then said the chief Priests of the Jews to Pilate, "Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, 'I am the King of the Jews!'" Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written." Then the Soldiers, when they had crucified JESUS, took His Garments and made four parts, to every Soldier a part, and also His Coat; now the Coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout; they said, therefore, among themselves, "Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be!" That the Scripture [Ps. xxii, 18.] might be Fulfilled, Which Saith, "They parted My Raiment among them; and for My Vesture they did cast lots." These things, therefore, the Soldiers did. Now there stood by the Cross of JESUS, His Mother and His Mother's Sister, Mary, the Wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene: when JESUS, therefore, Saw His Mother, and the Disciple standing by, whom He Loved, He Saith unto His Mother, "Woman, behold thy Son!" Then Saith He to the Disciple, "Behold thy Mother!" And from that hour that Disciple took her unto his own home.—Chap. xix, 17 to 27.*

St. John but lightly touches on the persecutions of JESUS and the Associates of His Crucifixion; but he gives an enlarged view of the motives which produced the characters, that were written over our SAVIOUR'S Head for the occasion; and shews that, though the chief Priests had, according to the other Evangelists, construed the writing to the ignorant Multitude as declaring the ground of accusation and condemnation of Him, they knew it bore a different interpretation, if rightly explained, and, therefore, they urged Pilate to alter it; but Pilate, though he had conceded much and surrendered his judgment to their prejudices, yet refused to do so in this instance, firmly resisting the application. It was a strong testimonial of his own conviction that JESUS was in truth "*The Expected MESSIAH*;" and it is only extraordinary that with such a belief, Pilate should not have been, not only almost, but altogether, a Christian. The inconsistency of Man is not confined to language or climate or age: those, who

most devoutly acknowledge CHRIST to be The LORD, yet by their occasional neglect of His Precepts or disobedience of His Commands, either in thought or in act, contribute Spiritually, as did Pilate Bodily, to the Crucifying The SON of GOD. This part of St. John's narrative concludes with a most affecting Incident personally connected with this Evangelist, and not noticed by Any of the Others, That of CHRIST'S Tender and Affectionate and Provident Consideration of His bereaved and sorrowing Mother; having also, as her sympathizing Companions, her Sister and the two other Females, who had evinced their undaunted devotion to Him, that is, the One, who was Mother to the Disciple that accompanied JESUS, as we shall afterwards find, on His Way to Emmaus after His Resurrection; the Other, either the Sister of Lazarus, whom He, for the Sister's sake, had raised from the Dead; or her, from whom He had Cast out seven devils. Amidst whatever of Bodily Anguish that could be endured from such a torturing and protracted Death, short of that state where insensibility is Mercifully interposed to save the Human frame from the sensation of pain too acute to be borne, CHRIST yet Gave His Thought to the sufferings of her, whose Sex's softness made her peculiarly the Object of His Affectionate and Compassionate Regard, when on the eve of being deprived of Him, Who had been her Solace and her Stay; and to whom He was particularly Bound as Man by the ties of Consanguinity: and in her hour of despair and that of the despondency of the Friends around her, He Provided for her through the sympathy of His attached Disciple; who, in all the modesty of true virtue, has thus concisely given the history of his cherished relationship to the holy Mother of JESUS: *from that hour that Disciple took her unto his own home.* Enviably, indeed was this Lot of St. John, in being thus so Pre-eminently Distinguished.

The SPIRIT of CHRIST was, indeed, assailed and tried with all the malice that the subtlety and restless efforts of Satan could bring into exercise; and some of the effects of that malice, which, by the Power of Inspiration, the holy David had prophetically witnessed, he thus, as in The Person of The MESSIAH, his Promised SEED, describes: "*THOU, LORD, hast Known My Reproach and My Shame and My Dishonour: Mine Adversaries are All before Thee. Reproach hath broken My Heart; and I am full of Heaviness; and I Looked for Some to take pity, but there was None; and for Comforters, but I Found None! They gave Me also gall for My Meat; and in My Thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink.*"—Ps. lxxix, 19 to 21.

It is hardly possible, perhaps, to select from the Gospels a more striking instance of the little of studied agreement that could subsist amongst the Evangelical Writers of Them, than the description of so short and particular a sentence, as the Superscription on the Cross affords: in substance they All agree, but differ in words, St. Matthew has it, "*This is JESUS, The King of the Jews.*" St. Mark, "*The KING of the Jews.*" St. Luke, "*This is The KING of the Jews.*" St. John, "*JESUS of Nazareth, The KING of the Jews.*" The Gift of tongues had not at that time been Communicated to them; they, probably, therefore, All wrote, though from memory only, the Hebrew portion of the Superscription, or its substance; but had they concerted amongst themselves to fabricate a history, would a variance in such a matter be likely to have occurred?

In Revelation of the future Sufferings of The MESSIAH, as here Portrayed by His Disciples, David, under his Prophetic Spirit, and as the Voice of his LORD, thus laid Them Open even to his own Generation: "*I am a worm, and no Man; a reproach of Men, and despised of the People. All they, that see Me, laugh Me to scorn; they shoot out the lip; they shake the head, saying, 'He trusted on The LORD, that He would Deliver him; Let Him Deliver him, seeing*

*he Delighted in Him!" They gaped upon Me with their mouths as a ravening and a roaring lion. I am Poured out like water; and all My Bones are out of joint; My Heart is like wax; It is Melted in the midst of My Bowels: My Strength is dried up, like a potsherd; and My Tongue cleaveth to My Jaws: and Thou hast Brought Me into the dust of Death! For dogs have compassed Me: the Assembly of the Wicked have inclosed Me; they pierced My Hands and My Feet: I may Tell all My Bones: they look and stare upon Me: they part My Garments among them, and cast lots upon My Vesture [Ps. xxii, 6 to 8. 13 to 18]. I Became also a reproach unto them; when they looked upon Me they shook their heads."*—Ps. cix, 25.

And how often, alas, is this picture of contempt towards The SON of Man and His Religion realized even in this our Generation! how much is He made a mockery and scorn of by the Sensualist, the Proud, and the Worldly-minded! what ridicule is raised against the Meekness, the Simplicity, the Purity of His Character and Doctrine! what oppression is heaped upon the true and zealous Followers of His Faith! how is their confidence in GOD treated with disdain, and every endeavour made to subvert it! By reason whereof, and of the infirmities of the flesh, which warreth against the Spirit, the Souls even of the most Faithful, are in jeopardy every day; lest they should be driven from their faith, and take refuge in the same course of deceivableness and Worldly dependance, rejecting The LORD, That Sought to Redeem them at a Price so Inestimable.

*"If they believe not Moses and the Prophets, neither would they believe though One were Sent to them from the Dead!"* Every One must know that it is Appointed unto all Men once to die; and, if he think at all thereupon, he must expect, after death, that Judgment will follow: this is the faith of Reason; but the faith, which is profitable for Salvation, stops not here, but is imbibed through the understanding into the heart, and there worketh, by repentance, unto newness of life and obedience unto Holiness. Had CHRIST Descended from the Cross, these reprobate Jews would have believed for the moment, and, like the Devils, trembled under the belief, lest CHRIST, in Further Manifestation of His Omnipotence, as The SON of GOD, should have Consumed them by the Breath of His Mouth in His Displeasure. But if He Reserved the Utterance of His Wrath, soon after He might Withdraw His Visual Presence from them, the hearts of these Children of Satan would have yielded to the impulse of their former habits and prejudices, and have set at nought the Warning, even so Markedly Extended to them, to Rescue them from their infidelity and its fatal and inevitable effects. Though they might have ceased openly to deny Him as The MESSIAH, or A Great Prophet from The LORD, they would not have surrendered their hearts to the Guidance of His Precepts or the Influence of His Grace, in the spirit of a penitent and lively faith, with sorrowing and contrite and humble minds.

△ The chief Priests, who persecuted JESUS unto death, thus unsuspectingly and as unintentionally form a link in the chain of Evidence that He was the CHRIST; for they declared that He Proclaimed Himself to be *The SON of GOD*: and, if He were not, then hath Prophecy failed: but the Holiness of His Life, the Wisdom and Purity of His Precepts, the Miracles He Wrought both as to their Nature and Effect, the sudden and general return of His Disciples to an open avowal of faith in Him and in devotedness to His Cause, the Conversion of Gentiles, as well of Jews, and their holding fast that faith in defiance of all the tortures that Spiritual and sensual pride and envy could devise, unite to stamp Him with That Character, Which can alone Give Remission of sins and Speak Peace as well as Pardon to the Soul. For His Own Power did Deliver

Him from greater pains than those of the Cross; even the grasp of the Grave and the pains of Hell; and, Rising to The MAJESTY on HIGH, He Awaits only His Own Chosen Time, when All His Enemies shall be made His Footstool. In Him the Scriptures, as Foretelling The MESSIAH, were, in All Respects, Fulfilled. It was necessary that He should Die as a Criminal, for They had Declared that *He should have His Death with the Wicked*: it was requisite also that He, Who was to be The Resurrection and the Life of His Servants, should Himself Rise from the grave, that He might, Thereby, Confirm their faith in Him; for Those Scriptures had likewise Declared, that *GOD would not Suffer His HOLY ONE to See Corruption*. With reference to This Subject, there are some Observations of Solomon which may be considered with advantage, as demonstrating the danger, as well as folly, of persecuting him whom GOD had Chosen, and, by necessary inference, in a pre-eminent degree, Him Whom GOD had Avowed, in a VOICE from HEAVEN, to be *His Well Beloved SON*. After setting forth various sayings of the *Ungodly*, when reasoning with themselves, but, as the Wisest of Men simply observes, *not aright*, in encouragement of their licentiousness from their denial of a future State and a Judgment to Come, and, amongst other things, saying, *Let us oppress the poor righteous Man! Let us lie in wait for him, because he is not for our turn, and he is clean, contrary to our doings: he upbraideth us with our offending the Law, and objecteth, to our infamy, the transgressings of our education: he professeth to have the knowledge of GOD; and he calleth himself "The Child of The LORD."* He was made to reprove our thoughts. He is grievous unto us even to behold; for his life is not like other Men's; his ways are of another fashion: we are esteemed of him as counterfeits: he abstaineth from our ways as from filthiness. He pronounceth the end of the Just to be blessed, and maketh his boast "that GOD is his FATHER." Let us see if his words be true, and let us prove what shall happen in the end of him: for, if the just Man be The Son of GOD, He will Help him and Deliver him from the hand of his Enemies! Let us examine him with despatchfulness and torture, that we may know his meekness and prove his patience! let us condemn him with a shameful death! for by his own saying he shall be respected. Such things (adds the Royal and Inspired Penman,) they did imagine, and were deceived; for their own wickedness hath blinded them. As for the Mysteries of GOD, they knew Them not; neither hoped they for the wages of righteousness; nor discerned a Reward for blameless Souls. For GOD Created Man to be Immortal; and Made him to be an Image of His Own Eternity. Nevertheless, through envy of the Devil came Death into the World; and they, that do hold of his side, do find it. But the Souls of the Righteous are in the Hand of GOD; and there shall no torment touch them. In the sight of the Unwise they seemed to die; and their departure is taken for misery; and their going from us to be utter destruction: but they are in Peace: for though they be punished in the sight of Men; yet is their hope full of Immortality: and having been a little Chastised, they shall be Greatly Rewarded; for GOD Proved them, and Found them worthy for Himself: as gold in the furnace hath He Tried them; and Received them as a Burnt Offering: and in the time of their Visitation they shall shine, and run to and fro like sparks among the stubble: they shall judge the Nations, and have dominion over the People: and their LORD shall Reign for Ever. They, that put their trust in Him, shall understand the Truth: and Such, as be faithful in love, shall abide with Him; for Grace and Mercy is to His Saints: and He hath Care for His Elect. But the ungodly shall be Punished according to their own imaginations, which have neglected the Righteous, and forsaken The LORD.—Wisd. ii, 1. 10. 12 to 24; iii, 1 to 10.

Such is a true representation of the Sustaining and Consoling Prospects of

the Faithful in CHRIST JESUS amidst their trials by suffering or bereavement in this life; and with equal fidelity is thus pictured the folly and peril of the Persecutors of CHRIST through His Followers: and in such an application of the spirit of the Text, we derive one of the most beneficial results from its contemplation: though CHRIST is no longer Bodily upon the Cross, we may, in spirit, nail Him there, and taunt Him with blasphemy, and deny Him to be *The SON of GOD*; but this can no longer be than our life here is extended to us; and when from that we are Summoned by Death to our account, what will then profit us the consequent conviction at the resurrection, that CHRIST was indeed The MESSIAH, if He Deny us to be His at His Coming: and this equally applies to the hypocritical Professors of a belief in Him, Whom in secrecy by their works they denied.

By the Dying, as by the Living, was He, Who Gave Himself a Ransom for All, rejected and despised: One, at least, of the Thieves, whose Lives had been given to unrighteousness, abrogating equally the law of Man as of GOD, disclaimed all faith in Him as A SAVIOUR, because they were in the same condemnation, and JESUS did not Assert His Almighty Power to Save Himself: for His Hour was not yet Come: and a Kingdom, not of this World, seemed foolishness to a mind so depraved and, perhaps, untutored from infancy in the way of Godliness. But the penitent Thief, though dying, read a lesson which has lived to our day, and will live till Time shall be no more. We, indeed, acknowledge JESUS to be The CHRIST, Slain from the foundation of the World; and through Him Alone, we say, we have hope of Eternal Life: but alas! how little do our actions correspond with our professions; for how little do we exhibit of that vital faith, which is manifested by obedience unto holiness, in veneration of That SAVIOUR, as A GOD of Purity, as well as of Benevolence! We call Him LORD; but do we yield Him the worship, that is His Due? And can faith really be, where Holiness is not? The Thief doubted, because he looked only with the natural eye on the Spiritual Nature of CHRIST; but we may fully discern Him, through Whom Alone Cometh Salvation, by the Light of The Gospel of Truth, to be Full of Grace and Truth, and to be Clothed with MAJESTY and Power; Holding in His Hand the Destinies of All Men. Yet if we discern Him not Spiritually; if we love Him not reverently from the heart, and engage not zealously in His Service, how can we, with a faith so dead, put any confidence in being Saved by Him, Who Requireth truth in the inward parts. CHRIST is indeed A SAVIOUR; but He is The SAVIOUR only of Those, who keep His Commandments, and conform to His Ordinances, delighting in and keeping His Ways even unto the end of life or up to its last consciousness. To Such, indeed, His Salvation is ever at Hand; and to them The Once Crucified JESUS will Prove Himself to be both LORD and CHRIST.

△ Now from the sixth hour there was Darkness over all the Land unto the ninth hour; and about the ninth hour JESUS Cried with a Loud Voice, Saying, "ELI! ELI! Lama Sabachthani?" that is to say, "MY GOD! My GOD! Why hast Thou Forsaken Me?" Some of them, that stood there, when they heard That, said, "This Man calleth for Elias!" And straightway One of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave Him to drink. The Rest said, "Let be! let us see whether Elias will come to save him!" JESUS, when He had Cried again with a Loud Voice, Yielded up the Ghost.—45 to 50.

When The SUN of Righteousness was on the confines of the grave, and Enveloped with the Gloom of approaching Death, the Sun of Nature might well withhold its shining. "*It shall come to pass in That Day, Saith The LORD GOD, that I will Cause the Sun to go down at noon; and I will Darken the Earth in the clear day.*"—Amos viii, 9. This, however, has a more direct reference

to the Great and Final Day of The LORD; of Which This Day of The LORD CHRIST and the Power Thus Exercised over the material World, were Typical. The mode of calculating day and night with the Jews was by the revolutions of the Sun; the day being considered only as continuing whilst that luminary was above the horizon; and in its absence night was deemed to prevail: the first hour of the day was the first hour of the Sun's rise above the horizon, usually, in that latitude and at that season, about six o'clock, the sixth hour was, consequently, about our noon, and from thence to the ninth hour would be with us between twelve and three o'clock in the afternoon, a period generally of almost meridian light even in the depth of winter. A total Eclipse was One amongst the Many Miraculous Events, as well as Supernatural Causes, That Marked the Setting of The SUN of Righteousness: but dark as was the face of Nature, the hearts of the Persecutors of JESUS were darker, through the evil that was in them: The DAY SPRING from On HIGH had Visited them; but they preferred the darkness of their prejudices to Such Liberating Light: fear came upon them, perhaps, but not such as proved in them profitable unto Wisdom and their Souls' peace; for humility and contrition and awakened faith they would not yield to, but continued on in their infatuated blindness. And does not the gloom of Self-condemnation overshadow the faltering and wavering Professor of zeal for Religion, when Reflection, through the light of Conscience and Revelation, lays open the unheeding and unmindful instances of ingratitude for DIVINE Sacrifices, when CHRIST, though so fully Revealed, as Crucified and Slain, is yet, in SPIRIT, Crucified afresh by them whom He Came to Save! Let us strive to seek an Interest in That Sacrifice, and to walk in the Way which leadeth unto Life Eternal! that we escape, in the Life to Come, that darkness, which is unceasingly felt; and where horror and despair, with their united effects, are only seen.

St. Mark hath it in nearly the same words as the Text: *And when the sixth hour was come, there was Darkness over the whole Land until the ninth hour.*—Chap. xv, 33.

St. Luke thus: *And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a Darkness over all the Earth until the ninth hour.*—Chap. xxiii, 44.

St. John (who wrote more to supply deficiencies in Doctrine,) does not notice this Circumstance.

The Suffering of CHRIST was now at its height; and The LAMB of GOD Opened His Mouth in the Agony of His SPIRIT. Now was, indeed, the hour of Darkness, when the power of Satan was most maliciously exerted against Him; and The SON of Man was Left Unaided in His Conflict with the Enemy of all Righteousness, whilst Bearing up against the inconceivable Incumbrance and Pressure of the sins of a Whole World. Well, indeed, might He Exclaim in the Words, Which His Progenitor, the Royal Psalmist, had Foretold that He would, "*MY GOD! MY GOD! Why hast Thou Forsaken Me?*"—Ps. xxii, 1. And does Man live on from day to day, and year to year, without casting even a thought on What The SON of GOD So Endured for the Salvation of Human Souls, that by repentance they might be Brought to a lively faith in Him? And can a Soul be indifferent to Spiritual concerns, except for a few hours, in a few days of a few years of its existence in a state professedly probationary; and expect the Everlasting Felicity of Heaven as a return for such service, when it Cost The KING of HEAVEN so much Agony and so Great a Sacrifice to Atone for Man's Guilt and Compensate for Man's ingratitude; and to Open to him an Entrance into That Way, Which Leadeth unto Life and Glory Everlasting: though of Which The Same CHRIST hath Declared that "*Few there be, that find It?*" GOD Forsaketh None, who fervently call upon and faithfully



trust in Him: but Such, as forsake Him in the life that is, will He Forsake in that Life, which is Eternal, and which, from the absence of His Favour alone, must be passed in the gall of bitterest woe and unending remorse and Self-crimination.

So Faint and almost Exhausted with Pain was the Crucifying JESUS, that His Words at last Seemed to have Fallen so indistinctly on the hearing of the Crowd around, that they were, probably, misunderstood by Some, who imagined, when He Cried out, as with a last Effort of Expiring Nature, "*ELOI! ELOI! Lama Sabachthani?*" that He Called for Elijah to rescue Him. Yet Others, in the wantonness and relentlessness of Spiritual persecution, added the insult and inhumanity of pressing to His parched Lips a nauseating draught, thereby, however, contributing to the Fulfilment of the Prophecy: "*Behold, and see, if there be any sorrow like unto My Sorrow!*"—Lamen. Jerem. i, 12.

St. Mark's narrative is thus: *And at the ninth hour JESUS Cried with a Loud Voice, Saying, "ELOI! ELOI! Lama Sabachthani?" which is, being interpreted, "MY GOD! My GOD! Why hast Thou Forsaken Me?" And Some of them, that stood by, when they heard It, said, "Behold, he calleth Elias!" And One ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave Him to drink, saying, "Let alone! let us see whether Elias will come to take him down!"*—Chap. xv, 34 to 36.

There is some slight difference between these Evangelists in the Name of The ALMIGHTY; but the difference in the pronunciation of the Hebrew and Greek may account for this. Neither St. Luke nor St. John expressly mention this Interesting and Affecting Incident and Exclamation, so minutely foretold in the Prophetic xxii Psalm.

△ St. Luke records that *when JESUS had Cried with a Loud Voice, He Said, "FATHER, into Thy Hands I Commend My SPIRIT."*—Chap. xxiii, 46. Words Drawn from the Same Inspired Source, and Prophetically Applied to The Same DIVINE MEDIATOR [Ps. xxxi, 5].

St. John furnishes the following description: *After this, JESUS, Knowing that All Things were now Accomplished, that The Scripture [Ps. lxix, 21.] might be Fulfilled, Saith, "I Thirst!" Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar; and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to His Mouth: when JESUS, therefore, had Received the vinegar, He Said, "It is Finished!"*—Chap. xix, 28 to 30.

Deep as must have been the Sufferings of CHRIST, in the momentary apprehension that GOD might *Leave His SOUL in Hell, and Suffer His HOLY ONE to See corruption*, yet, as the Fruit of a Prayer so Earnest, Which CHRIST here Put forth, the Consolations of The SPIRIT were Administered unto Him; and, in Its Fulness, His Confidence Returned, and He Said, "*FATHER, into Thy Hand I Commit My SPIRIT.*" In all our difficulties and trials, in the midst of temptations, and in the hour of death, He, thereby, Set us the Example of faith and patience, Shewing us on Whom we are to call for Succour, and in Whom to trust for Salvation, even The LORD of HOSTS, The Mighty GOD. The Everlasting FATHER, upon Whom we are Invited to cast all our care, under the encouraging Assurance that *HE Careth for us!* St. Mark thus confirms the Outbreak of The Crucified REDEEMER'S Agony: and St. John superadds his testimony to the cruel officiousness and insult of pressing upon His Parched and Thirsty Lips the sourest of liquids.

The Mental and Bodily Anguish of The Incarnate SON of GOD again Found Utterance in Words; but was again, probably, Followed by Such Expressions of Resignation, as are to be gathered from the account furnished us by St. Luke and St. John. And at length when the Utmost Farthing of the

Debt of Corporeal Endurance was Paid, He Found His Discharge from Suffering in Death, and, in the Language of Scripture, *Yielded up The GHOST*; that is, Gave up The SPIRIT, That was in Him, as Man, to GOD, Who Gave It. St. Mark's account is similar: *And JESUS Cried with a Loud Voice, and Gave up The GHOST*.—Chap. xv, 37.

St. Luke, as partly before observed, hath it thus: *And when JESUS had Cried with a Loud Voice, He Said, "FATHER, into Thy Hands I Commend My SPIRIT!" And having Said thus, He Gave up The GHOST*.—Chap. xxiii, 46.

And St. John hath written, *When JESUS, therefore, had Received the vinegar, He Said, "It is Finished!" And He Bowed His Head, and Gave up The GHOST*.—Chap. xix, 30.

"*It is Finished!*" In These Few, but Latest Words of The Suffering SAVIOUR, What Immensity of Thought and of Feeling must have Presented Itself to Him, and Which only A DIVINE MIND could Embrace. From the Beginning to the End of Time, He Viewed All the Countless Generations of the Earth, and the Destinies of Those who, by His Intercessory Sacrifice were to share Salvation, by the Terms Thereof on Man's first fall from obedience. All had been Graciously and Perseveringly Fulfilled Which He then Covenanted to Accomplish, and All had been Patiently Borne, Which had been Foretold should be The MESSIAH'S Offering to Reconcile GOD to Man, and Restore The HOLY SPIRIT'S Influence to his Regenerated Nature through faith in That Merciful and Wondrous Mediation.

The phrase of *Giving up the Ghost*, as significative of dying, is not peculiar to the New Testament: for in the first Book of the Pentateuch it is related of Jacob, that when he had made an end of his dying addresses to his Sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the Ghost; and was gathered unto his People.—Gen. xlix, 33.

In allusion to the Judgments of DIVINE Chastisements Visited upon Jerusalem, the Prophet Jeremiah thus forcibly, though figuratively, characterizes her state: *Her Sun hath gone down, ere it was yet day: she hath given up the Ghost*.—Jer. xv, 9. So in the vision of his lamentation over Jerusalem, and the Prophetic view of the misery of her condition from the effects of her apostacy and rebellion, he breaks out, as himself personating Zion, into the exclamation, *My Priests and mine Elders gave up the Ghost in the City, while they sought their meat to relieve their Souls*.—Lam. i, 19. In the Acts of the Apostles, where the awful fate that befel Ananias and Sapphira, for their offence of concerting together to lye unto The LORD, is used the term of *Yielded up the Ghost*.—Acts v, 5. 10. *Man was Formed of the dust of the Ground, and GOD Breathed into his nostrils the Breath of Life, and Man became a Living Soul*.—Gen. ii, 7. And according to Solomon, when *Man goeth to his long home, then shall the dust return to the Earth, as it was; and the Spirit shall return unto GOD, Who Gave it*.—Eccles. xii, 5 to 7. In another place the same Inspired Writer draws the distinction between the brute creation and the Human Race, though Both are alike subject to bodily death, thus: *I said in mine heart concerning the estate of the Sons of Men, that GOD might Manifest them; and that (in one sense) they might see that they themselves are beasts: for that which befalleth the Sons of Men, befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them; as the One dieth, so dieth the Other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a Man hath (in that respect,) no pre-eminence above a beast: for all is vanity: All go unto one place: All are of the dust; and All turn to dust again. And then, rising from the depth of meditation, he asks, Who knoweth the Spirit of Man, that goeth upward; and the spirit of the beast, that goeth downward to the Earth?*—Eccles. iii, 18 to 21.

"*FATHER, into Thy Hands I Commend My SPIRIT!*" This is the Ghost, Which CHRIST Yielded up. And so must All of Human Nature

surrender up their Spiritual Part, in the instant of death, to The CREATOR, JEHOVAH. In respect to this Immortal Part of our Nature it is, that we are equal to the Angels, though in our flesh we are lower than they, and more resemble the brute creation. As St. Paul has represented, in the fullest force of his descriptive powers: *There is a Natural Body, and there is a Spiritual Body. The first Man, Adam, was Made a living Soul; The Last ADAM was Made A Quickening SPIRIT. The first Man is of the Earth, Earthy: The Second Man is The LORD from Heaven: and, as we have borne the image of the Earthy, we shall also bear the Image of The HEAVENLY.* And the Apostle hence takes occasion to reason, in encouragement of our preparing our Spiritual Part, by faith in CHRIST and obedience unto Holiness, for that State, in Which we should hope to find ourselves on our severally yielding up the Ghost: *This I say, Brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit The KINGDOM of GOD: neither doth corruption inherit Incorruption. Behold! I shew you a Mystery; We shall not All sleep; but we shall All be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the Last Trump; for the Trumpet shall sound, and the Dead shall be Raised Incorruptible; and we shall be Changed: for this corruptible must put on Incorruption; and this mortal must put on Immortality: for since by Man came death, by MAN came also the Resurrection of the Dead; for as in Adam All die, even so in CHRIST shall All be Made Alive. So when this corruptible shall have put on Incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on Immortality, then shall be brought to pass the Saying that is Written [in Isaiah xxv, 8], 'Death is swallowed up in Victory!' O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory? The sting of Death is sin; and the strength of sin is the Law: but thanks be to GOD, Which Giveth us the Victory through our LORD JESUS CHRIST; Therefore, (the Apostle goes on admonishingly to say,) my beloved Brethren, be ye stedfast, immovable, always abounding in the Work of The LORD; for as much as ye know that your labour is not in vain in The LORD!—1 Cor. xv, 44 to 45. 47 to 58. 21, 22.*

It is this surrender of his Spirit to his MAKER, that distinguishes in death Man from the rest of animated Nature; and it is the possession of this Spirit in life, which gives to Man the capacity to walk and hold converse with The MOST HIGH: to that end it is Given, that, if rightly employed to the Glory of GOD upon Earth, it may under the Sanctifying Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT, and through faith in the Efficacy of CHRIST'S Mediation, qualify us for a communion and fellowship with the Saints and Angels, as Inheritors of The REDEEMER'S KINGDOM of Righteousness and Peace. Thus to yield up the Ghost, and commit our Souls into the Hands of our HEAVENLY FATHER, in fervent hope of His Favourable Acceptance of them, is, indeed, to die the death of the Righteous, and to insure, at the last, their experience of peace. It is to pass from a World beset with temptations, to a Life without end, and the possession of the perfection of happiness in it. And the Prevalence of DIVINE Love, and the Manifestation of DIVINE Wisdom will be the Effect of the Outpouring of A SAVIOUR'S Intercession, in Furtherance of our pure and surpassing Joy Therein.

△ And, behold, the Veil of the Temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom: and the Earth did quake, and the rocks rent; and the graves were opened: and many Bodies of the Saints, which slept, arose, and came out of the graves after His Resurrection, and went into the holy City, and appeared unto Many. Now when the Centurion, and they, that were with him, watching JESUS, saw the earthquake, and Those Things, That were Done, they feared greatly, saying, "Truly This was the SON of GOD!" And Many Women were there, beholding afar off, which followed JESUS from Galilee, ministering unto Him: among which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the Mother of James and Joses, and the Mother of Zebedee's Children.—51 to 56.

The Veil or Vail of the Temple was interposed between the Holy, and

Holy of Holies. By the Mosaic Institution the order for its formation and purpose was thus given: *And thou shalt make a Vail of blue and purple and scarlet, and fine twined linen of cunning work; with Cherubims shall it be made: and thou shalt hang it upon four pillars of shittim wood, overlaid with gold; their hooks shall be of gold, upon the four sockets of silver: and thou shalt hang up the Vail under the taches, that thou mayest bring in thither within the Vail the Ark of the Testimony: and the Vail shall divide unto you between the Holy Place and the most Holy.*—Exod. xxvi, 31 to 33; 2 Chron. iii, 14.

In the instant of the prevalence of the power of darkness, The HOLY ONE of Israel, being Subjected unto Death for the sins of Human Kind, the Holy of Holies, Which was the Type of His Sanctity and Purity, was, by Supernatural Agency, subjected to exposure by the rending of the Curtain, that had concealed it. Man had shewn no reverence for The Holy SON of GOD, though The BEARER of A Covenant of Everlasting Peace: to Influence, therefore, to a continuing veneration for That, Which was only Typical of His Sanctity, would have been only to have wrought additional folly in Israel. And not only was the Veil of the Temple torn from the top to the bottom, but the very Earth was made to manifest, as it were, terror and distress at the apostasy and madness of her Sons; and as a foretaste of the general Resurrection, yielded up entombed Bodies of her Departed Ones, whose Spirits had sighed to see What was the Object of their chief hope in life and of Consolation at their death, and should have been the Desire of all People, testifying, in effect, from the Dead the Wonderful Love and Condescension of GOD in CHRIST, and Proclaiming The SON of Mary to be The Predicted MESSIAH.

St. Mark, in very concise words, touches on this Part of the Gospel History; but he thus bears testimony to the material Circumstance: *And the Veil of the Temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.*—Chap. xv, 38.

St. Luke also omits any mention of a partial resurrection, saying only, *And the Sun was darkened, and the Veil of the Temple was rent in the midst.*—Chap. xxiii, 45.

The testimony of a heathen Soldier is thus given to confirm us Christians in the right faith: the Mighty Wonders, That were Wrought around him, Bespoke a Mightier Hand than that of Man, and a Higher Course than the ordinary operation of Natural things; and his heart was not so steeled by pride or prejudice as to veil his understanding in wilful darkness: in the spirit of a love of truth he owned CHRIST to be The LORD of Life, even in the hour of His Mortal Death. And well may it be for us, if our acknowledgment of Him, as The SON of GOD, spring, in like manner, from the heart, and influence us to look to Him in faith, and manifest a love for Him, Who so Loved us, and to obey Him, Who, for us, Became Obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Cross.

St. Mark hath it thus: *And when the Centurion, which stood over against Him, saw that He so Cried out and Gave up the Ghost, he said, "Truly This Man was The SON of GOD!"*—Chap. xv, 39. This Evangelist thus agrees in the fact of the Centurion's avowal of CHRIST'S being The SON of GOD, though he, at least, omits part of the cause that, most probably, led to such conduct in One, expressly appointed by the Adversaries of JESUS not to pay Him honour, but, on the contrary, to minister and give efficacy to their vindictive cruelty towards Him.

St. Luke says: *Now when the Centurion saw What was Done, he glorified GOD, saying, "Certainly This was a Righteous Man."*—Chap. xxiii, 47. This latter Evangelist is admissively less direct as an evidence of the Centurion's confession of CHRIST as *The SON of GOD*; but if JESUS were a Righteous

Man, even in a Heathen's estimation, we have His Own Testimony that He was GOD as well as Man. In the interview between our SAVIOUR and the Man, who was born blind, but to whom JESUS Gave sight, on JESUS Asking him if he believed on The SON of GOD, and the Man replying, "*Who is He? that I might believe on Him.*" JESUS Said unto him, "*Thou hast both seen Him, and it is He, That Talketh with thee.*"—John ix, 37. In the mind of the Evangelist, the Centurion glorified GOD by his faith in CHRIST as The SUN of Righteousness; and in that sense, doubtless, he meant his narrative to be received and understood. May this Centurion, with only so brief an opportunity of instruction in the Way of true Holiness, amidst the influence of a previous life of ignorance and heathen superstition, and an avocation so usually opposed to religious truth and its grace of humility, not rise up in judgment against us, who have been taught, all our Lives, to glorify GOD; for that He hath Given His SON to be A Sufficient Atonement for the sins of Mankind, and Requires only the adoption of faith, in the fulness of its spirit, to Impart the Efficacy of That Great Propitiatory and Reconciling Offering to our Souls.

△ At the hazard of insult and persecution the Women, who had fondly hung upon the Words of JESUS' Lips, and witnessed the Gracious Miracles He Wrought, thinking it their highest honour, and making it their heartiest gratification to administer to His temporal necessities and comfort, still kept Him (when forsaken of all Men that had promised allegiance,) in their eye, and by the dejection of their countenances bespoke, in language not to be misunderstood, the fervour and purity of their love for Him, and the depth and sincerity of their grief at His Sufferings: yet even this acknowledgment of Him was, through the influence of Human infirmity, tainted with timidity, for it is recorded, *that the Women stood afar off*: but CHRIST had not then Risen from the Dead to Confirm them in the faith of His DIVINITY: still they sorrowed for Him, with a holy sorrow. Their affliction, however, was but for a season.

St. Mark's description is thus: *There were also Women looking on afar off; among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the Mother of James the less and of Joses and Salome, (who also, when JESUS was in Galilee, followed Him and ministered unto Him,) and many other Women, which came up with Him unto Jerusalem.*—Chap. xv, 40, 41.

In the early part of the Gospel by St. Luke, that Evangelist thus makes mention of these Women: *And it came to pass, that JESUS went throughout every City and Village, Preaching and Shewing the Glad Tidings of The KINGDOM of GOD; and the Twelve were with Him, and certain Women, which had been Healed of evil Spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven Devils, and Joanna the Wife of Chuza, Herod's Steward, and Susanna, and many Others, which ministered unto Him of their substance.*—Chap. viii, 1 to 3. And the same Evangelist thus again speaks of them, with reference to this particular occasion: *And all the People, that came together to That Sight, beholding the Things Which were Done, smote their breasts and returned. And All His Acquaintance and the Women, that followed Him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding These Things.*—Chap. xxiii, 48, 49.

Even the Multitude, whom the artifices of the Priesthood and the semblance of Judicial discrimination had misled, and who had no evil in their heart, were affected, even to the most impassioned grief at the Sufferings, to which the Wonder-Working and Benignant JESUS had been Exposed; the Superiority of Whose Nature had equally, by the Wisdom of His Discourse as the Sweetness of His Manner, been powerfully Impressed upon them: for St. Luke says, *They followed Him a great Company of People, and of Women, which also bewailed and lamented Him.*—Chap. xxiii, 27.

When the Even was come, there came a rich Man of Arimathea, named Joseph, who also himself was JESUS' Disciple: he went to Pilate, and begged the Body of JESUS. Then Pilate commanded the Body to be delivered. And when Joseph had taken the Body, he wrapped It in a clean linen cloth, and laid It in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock; and he rolled a great stone to the door of the Sepulchre, and departed. And there was Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the Sepulchre.—57 to 61.

Previously to this application for the Body of JESUS there were Events of import, as Fulfilling some Prophecies Which Pointed at JESUS, and of Which St. John has alone furnished us with any account, as follows: *The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the Bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath Day, (for that Sabbath Day was an high Day,) besought Pilate that Their legs might be broken, and that They might be taken away. Then came the Soldiers, and brake the legs of the First, and of the Other, which was crucified with him. But when they came to JESUS, and saw that He was Dead already; they brake not His Legs: but One of the Soldiers with a spear pierced His Side; and forthwith came Thereout Blood and Water. And he, that saw It, bare record; and his record is true; and he knoweth that he saith true; that ye might believe. For These Things were Done, that the Scripture [Exod. xii, 46; Num. ix, 12; Ps. xxxiv, 20,] should be Fulfilled, "A Bone of Him shall not be broken:" and again, Another Scripture [Ps. xxii, 16, 17; Zech. xii, 10,] saith, "They shall look on Him, Whom they pierced."*—St. John xix, 31 to 37. By the Mosaic Institution it was thus ordained: "*If a Man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree, his body shall not remain all night upon the tree; but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day.*"—Deut. xxi, 22, 23. In conformity with this Ordinance of their great Lawgiver, and especially in regard to the holy Day, when the Feast of the Passover was to be celebrated, the Priests and Scribes and other Jews, who were of the Council of Persecution, sought the removal of JESUS' Body: thus claiming the merit of observing ceremonial rites, when neglecting, or rather infringing, in a manner the most blasphemous, the weightiest Matters of that Law, Mercy and Just Judgment; and sacrificing The Very LAMB of GOD, Who Came to Rescue Man from his bondage under sin, and of Whom and Whose Work of Salvation the Paschal lamb and the Delivery from Egyptian bondage, of which it was the memorial, were the mere Type and Figure. But such is the inconsistency of Man, when his religion is not the religion of the heart: and thus may the outward profession of the service of GOD become an abomination unto Him.

Exhausted by His long Suspension on the Cross, and by copious discharges of Blood, but little was wanting to Extinguish the Last Embers of Life, and this little the violence of breaking the limbs, which under other circumstances might not have proved mortal, in the Malefactors accomplished: but a Bone of Him, Whose Feet and Hands were pierced, and Whose Flesh had been lacerated by the scourge, was not to be broken. Still, even in death, indignity was to be offered to Him, and the iron would have entered into His Soul or Seat of Animal Life, if That Soul had not previously been Separated from the Body. And in reference to this Manifestation of CHRIST'S Carnal Nature, as having Taken upon Him our flesh, in that Blood and Water came issuing from the Aperture made by the spear, the same Apostle, in inculcating the indispensableness of faith in The Crucified JESUS, as The SON of GOD, saith, *This is He, That Came by Water and Blood, even JESUS CHRIST: not by Water only, but by Water and Blood.*—1 John v, 6.

Difficult as CHRIST had Declared it to be, for a rich Man to enter into The KINGDOM of GOD, yet One, it here seems, was found to do honour unto Him, Who had Laid down His Life upon Earth to Open The KINGDOM of

HEAVEN to All Believers without distinction of Rank or Age or Sex. Joseph of Arimathea, amidst the superabundance of Earthly prosperity, yet set his heart chiefly upon Those Riches That are Above; his most valued treasures were the Riches of The Wisdom of GOD'S Word; and having, with gladness, heard That Word from The SON of GOD Himself, when Tabernacled in the Flesh, he revered the Lifeless Trunk Which lately Such A Righteous SPIRIT had Animated; he even *begged* the Body, thus submitting to seek as a favour, from the hand of an unrighteous Judge and a Heathen, That which would expose him to the sneers, if not the rancorous hostility of his faithless and relentless Countrymen.

Pilate, instigated, perhaps, by his Wife's suggestion, being at one time willing to have saved JESUS, was not unwilling that the last honours might be paid Him, of Whom he had proclaimed the Title of "The KING of the Jews," under such a solicitation, and gave command that *The Body should be Delivered*. Thus even in Death JESUS had honour paid Him. Distinguished by wealth and station, Joseph allotted the tomb he had destined for himself and family, to receive first within its womb the Body of ONE, Who had been ignominiously Executed as a Criminal, regarded and treated by Those in power as the very Outcast of the People. The pride of the Rich only in this World's goods would have shrunk from such an union even in death; but Joseph's reverential love for CHRIST was paramount to all other feeling, and in the spirit of a holy alliance and of Brotherly adoption, in his own vault he solicits to be allowed to deposit the Earthly Remains of his Spiritual TEACHER, not, perhaps, aware that in so doing, he was instrumental to the fulfilment of a Prophecy, Delivered above 700 years before, namely, *And He Made His Grave with the Wicked, and with the Rich in His Death*.—Isa. liii, 9. After he had this done, Joseph departed: but Mary Magdalene and the other Mary remained, sorrowing in silence over the tomb, which contained All That on Earth they had so highly and so justly venerated: they now stood not far off from the Burial Place of their adored MASTER, trusting that the malice of His bitterest Enemies was sufficiently glutted by His seeming Extermination, and that it would not pursue them to an interruption of their holy and devoted object, well knowing that, though His Enemies had killed the Body, there was no more that they could do in persecution of His SPIRIT.

St. Mark's description is as follows: *And now, when the Even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath, Joseph of Arimathea, an honourable Counsellor, which also waited for The KINGDOM of GOD, came and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the Body of JESUS. And Pilate marvelled if He were already Dead; and calling unto him the Centurion, he asked him, "whether He had been any while Dead?" and when he knew it of the Centurion, he gave the Body to Joseph. And he bought fine linen, and took Him down and wrapped Him in the linen, and laid Him in a Sepulchre, which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the Sepulchre. And Mary Magdalene, and Mary the Mother of Joses, beheld Where He was Laid* Chap. xv, 42 to 47.

From hence we have a more full disclosure of Joseph's rank and character: he was not only rich in wealth, but exalted in station, being not only a Counsellor, but an honourable One; and yet, with such temporal blessings and advantages around him, there was a Higher and more Deserving Object at which he so laboured to arrive, namely, the Advent of The KINGDOM or Rule of CHRIST in his heart, and the obtaining the Fruits of His Gracious Ministration, in the Wisdom and Power of GOD. He breathed the true Patriot Spirit, in wishing and working for the advancement of Righteousness and true Lib-

ness amongst the People of his Country, and particularly amongst the Members of his Beloved MASTER'S Family and Flock; heartily striving, by honouring Him even in death, to sustain the hopes of Those, who were Israelites indeed, and had rested their faith on Him as The HOLY ONE of Israel. *He that walketh as in the Sight of GOD, fears not the eye of Man*: Joseph, therefore, not only went, but boldly went to Pilate, to ask for the Body of JESUS, thereby openly testifying his faith in Him, and his belief that He was indeed The MESSIAH, The PRINCE of Heavenly Peace, The KING of Israel; to *Whom All the Prophets bare witness*. *Who is bold? and I am not bold?* said the Apostle of the Gentiles; and if Any boast, let him boast in the Name of The LORD JESUS CHRIST, and in Him Crucified!

Pilate's hesitation in delivering the Body to Joseph, until satisfied of Its death, is attributable to his implied engagement to fulfil the wishes of the Jewish Rulers and infatuated Multitude to persecute JESUS unto death; but, this Done, Pilate felt his authority unshackled, and freely, therefore, granted the request. Joseph, it seems, not only provided a clean linen cloth, but one of a fine quality, which he bought for the Occasion, thereby manifesting, in a marked degree, his disinterested love and persevering and respectful regard for his departed TEACHER.

The account furnished by Another Evangelist is thus: *And, behold, there was a Man named Joseph, a Counsellor, and he was a good Man and a just; (the Same had not consented to the council and deed of them;) he was of Arimathea, a City of the Jews; who also himself waited for the KINGDOM of GOD: this Man went unto Pilate, and begged the Body of JESUS; and he took It down, and wrapped It in linen, and laid It in a Sepulchre, that was hewn in stone; wherein never Man before was laid. And that day was the preparation; and the Sabbath drew on. And the Women also, which came with JESUS from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the Sepulchre, and how His Body was laid.*—Luke xxiii, 50 to 55.

From hence it should seem that Joseph was One of the Council of Elders, that sat in judgment on JESUS; but that he dissented from the sentence of condemnation; and, as far as his voice and influence could go, sought not merely the acquittal, but the Exaltation to honour, at least, of his hallowed MASTER; and not only did he reverence Him when Alive, but strove to pay homage to His Remains when Dead.

The narrative by St. John is as follows: *And after this Joseph of Arimathea, being a Disciple of JESUS, but secretly, for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the Body of JESUS: and Pilate gave him leave: he came, therefore, and took the Body of JESUS. And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to JESUS by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight. Then took they the Body of JESUS, and wound It in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. Now in the place, where He was Crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden a new Sepulchre, wherein was never Man yet laid: there laid they JESUS therefore, because of the Jews' preparation day; for the Sepulchre was nigh at hand.*—Chap. xix, 38 to 42.

At first sight there may be thought to exist a contradictory statement between St. Mark and St. John, the One using the word "secretly," and the Other "boldly," but they may be reconciled by applying the one to Pilate, and the other to the Jews: towards the latter Joseph used secrecy, lest they might anticipate his object and disappoint it; but when he had reached the immediate approach to Pilate, he went unreservedly unto him, being eager to rescue his SAVIOUR'S Body from further degradation; and being not ashamed to avow before Pilate his desire to do his Crucified SAVIOUR honour. There also we



are assured that not only Joseph, an honourable Counsellor, but Nicodemus, a Master or Ruler among the Jews, though a Pharisee, also came to pay respect to the Body of Him, Who, when Living, had Opened to him the Stores of Spiritual knowledge; Teaching him and us, through the Record of That Invaluable Lesson, that, *except a Man be born again of Water and of The SPIRIT, he cannot enter into The KINGDOM of GOD.*—John, iii, 1. 5.


△ Now the next day, that followed the day of the Preparation, the chief Priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, saying, "Sir, we remember that that Deceiver said, while he was yet alive, 'After three days I will rise again.' Command, therefore, that the Sepulchre be made sure, until the third day, lest his Disciples come by night and steal him away, and say unto the People, 'He is risen from the Dead!' So the last error shall be worse than the first." Pilate said unto them, "Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can!" So they went, and made the Sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a Watch.—62 to 66.

In the consciousness of the prevalence of lying and treachery in their own breasts, the Pharisees naturally were suspicious of Others, and though they had seen CHRIST Dead, and had themselves been the primary instruments of His Destruction, yet did they apprehend that some artifice would be practised, and that CHRIST would be represented by His Disciples as again alive, since in saying, "*Destroy this Temple! and in three days I will Raise It up,*" [John ii, 19.] the Jews understood Him to Speak of His Own Body and the Resurrection Thereof in three days after His Death. This was the Accusation first made against Him, but abandoned, as not strong enough to induce to His condemnation; yet, though weak and of no weight towards the effectuating His Death, it was employed as a taunt and contempt towards His Memory after His Death. The Jews felt, that if they could shew CHRIST Dead after the third day, they could most effectually justify their crucifixion of Him as a Liar and Blasphemer; and therefore they determined on adopting the most effectual expedient to keep the Body from the reach of JESUS' Followers: they knew that if He did Rise again, Such Resurrection would be an Irresistible Proof of His DIVINITY; and even the report of His Rising again they were apprehensive might gain credit among His Admirers and the Multitude that had manifested an interest in His Favour, and who were more deterred by the artifices of the Priests, than by the Roman arms, from expressing that interest with the eloquence of physical power. The Popular odium seems to have been more an object of dread with these proud Pharisees, than the offending their GOD; and they were, evidently, less solicitous for the Coming of The MESSIAH, than for the confirmation and continuance of the supremacy they so corruptly exercised over the minds of their Fellow-Creatures. Not trusting to the improbability of Those, who had so reverently performed the last offices of tender regard for His Memory, disturbing the Remains of their Adored TEACHER, in reference to the influence of that law, which pronounced the very touch of a dead body to produce uncleanness, and which was visited with temporary excommunication, the Jews placed a massy stone at the entrance of the Sepulchre, affixing to it an Official seal, that they might have their own assurance that their surmise would not be realized: added to which they were allowed to instruct, in their own way, the Watchmen or Military Guard set over the grave; in the words used by Pilate, "*Ye have a Watch,*" implying an authority to direct it. But weak and vain are the councils of Man, when dictated by the suggestions of an evil heart. If JESUS were The CHRIST, the absence of prejudice, and dispassionate consideration would have taught them that neither stones, nor seals, nor Guards, nor the Sepulchre, nor the cords of Death, nor the power of Hell, could possibly detain The SON of

GOD, and that, therefore, such feeble efforts would only bring down on the Makers of them scorn and derision. But that if JESUS were not The CHRIST, then might they have understood that, if left alone and not brought into further notice by continued persecution of His Followers, His Doctrine must come to nought, as being, consequently, founded in misconception or misrepresentation. But the wisdom of Man is foolishness with GOD; and yet even our folly He Diverteth to His Own Only Wise and Gracious Purposes. Amidst all this precaution, with such indefatigable zeal and Self-satisfaction employed by the Jews, where is to be found, in the written or traditionary History of those Times, any evidence that CHRIST, Who they so wished to prove did not rise on the third day, or from the grave at all, actually Continued Dead during the whole of the three days, or was ever after traced by His Body or His Skeleton either by Jew or Gentile? And what would the Jews, who avowed that the last error would be worse than the first, have given or done to have established, in the face of day, that the Body of JESUS, which had been Declared as The True Temple for Worship, though palpably rendered Lifeless at the Crucifixion, was not Built up on the third day as Foretold, but Remained within the bands of the grave, guarded, as at first, by the spears and weapons of a Military Force, which CHRIST'S Scattered Disciples were incapable of opposing, and as little likely to corrupt or as having the means of corrupting?

St. Luke, in continuation, records: *That the Women returned and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath Day according to the Commandment.*—Chap. xxiii, 56.

From hence also it should seem that the faithful Followers of JESUS, to the last, were yet without faith as to His Immediate Resurrection: for spices are the elements of embalming Bodies for a lengthened preservation of them from corruption.

CHAP. xxviii.—In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, to see the Sepulchre. And, behold, there was a great Earthquake: for the Angel of The LORD descended from Heaven, and came, and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it: his countenance was like lightning; and his raiment white as snow. And for fear of him the Keepers did shake, and became as dead Men.—1 to 4. 

The Jewish Sabbath closed with the Saturday's setting sun; and, when the dawn of the succeeding day opened, the two faithful Marys, usually foremost in testifying their gratitude to their SAVIOUR, presented themselves at His Sepulchre, rather, it should seem, to continue and manifest their mourning for His Death, than with any expectation of finding Him Risen to Life. But no sooner were they come to engage in their sorrowful occupation of waiting and watching in view of the Grave, than the violent agitation around them bespoke a Supernatural Agency, and a Messenger from On HIGH visited them, with healing on his wings, to support and rejoice their hearts, though striking terror by his appearance on the hearts of the otherwise dauntless Soldiery. At his touch the massive stone rolled back, and the door of the Tomb flew open: and thence CHRIST had Arisen in the Meekness of Spiritual Triumph, without, perhaps, the observation of the Watchmen around, as their terror had dimmed or darkened their vision. But for the purpose of getting access to the Grave an Angel, armed with the Terrors of DIVINE Power, with a countenance like lightning and in raiment of purity, retained a position still to unnerve the hearts and to paralyze the arms of the astounded Soldiery; and, at the same time, to encourage the Female Mourners to advance. The Latter, after witnessing the unaltered state of the mouth of the Sepulchre, saw the Angel break the seal,

and roll back the stone: the stoutest heart of the chosen Band then wholly failed him, leaving him more helpless than an Infant: the hand that, perhaps, struck the Face of JESUS in the Judgment Hall, and the knee that bent to Him in scorn and mockery, now were palsied and trembled at the presence of the Supernatural Agent or Minister of Him, Whom they had so cruelly and despitely used: fear in its worst character, amidst the double consciousness of guilt and impotence, thrilled through their Souls and froze up their very life-blood; it found no language to give utterance; nor could language have adequately described it. But such fear, and far greater, will be upon All, that have lightly esteemed The LORD, That Bought them, when the stones shall be raised from all sepulchres, and the Earth and Sea shall give up their Dead, and All shall appear before That LORD for Judgment and Final Destination: and, if the countenance of the Angel was like lightning, what shall be That of This JUDGE of Quick and Dead? ~~~~~

~~~~~St. John describes This: *The SON of Man, as Clothed with a Garment down to the Foot; and Girt about the Paps with a Golden Girdle: His Head and His Hair white like wool, as white as snow: His Eyes as a flame of Fire; and His Feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace: and His Voice as the sound of many Waters; Having in His Right Hand Seven Stars; out of His Mouth a sharp two-edged sword; and His Countenance as the Sun shining in its strength. And (adds the Evangelist,) when I saw Him, I fell at His Feet as dead!*—Rev. i, 13 to 17.

And justly may it be asked, and wisely may it be considered, *If the Righteous hardly be Saved, what shall the Wicked and the Sinners do?* But the answer of the true Christian is, *Thanks be to GOD, Who hath Given us Hope and Consolation in His Holy Word*, that as JESUS Said unto John, He will Say unto All, who fear Him with a holy fear, and love to keep His Commandments, "*Fear not! I am The FIRST and The LAST: I am He, That Liveth; and was Dead: and, behold, I am Alive for Evermore! Amen! and Have the Keys of Hell and of Death.*"—Rev. i, 17, 18.

St. Mark's description of This is as follows: *And, when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the Mother of James and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint Him: and very early in the morning, the first day of the week, they came unto the Sepulchre at the rising of the sun; and they said among themselves, "Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the Sepulchre?" And, when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away; for it was very great: and, entering into the Sepulchre, they saw a young Man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment: and they were affrighted.*—Chap. xvi, 1 to 5.

A confirmation of the two Marys expecting to find JESUS Dead; not remembering, perhaps, at the instant, His Prophetic Declaration, "*I will Rise again the third day;*" and the spices they procured to embalm His Body were not less costly, probably, than the ointment with which One of the same Marys had anointed Him before His Death. The zeal and eagerness with which this Evangelist seeks to describe his LORD and SAVIOUR'S Rising from the grasp of Death, and the sealed confines of the grave, has led to his omission of Some of the attendant circumstances noticed by St. Matthew: and he appears to give the Description, as it may have been furnished to him by some of The MES-SIAH'S Followers, who, we shall presently see, came, some time after these Women, to the Sepulchre: no mention is made of the Guards; and the Angel, who is not here named under that character, is found in a position different from that described in the Text, which, however, may be accounted for as being at a subsequent time to the Angel's first appearance to the Soldiery.

The narrative by St. Luke is thus: *And the Women also, which came with JESUS from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the Sepulchre; and how His Body was laid. Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the Sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared; and certain Others with them: and they found the stone rolled away from the Sepulchre, and they entered in, and found not the Body of The LORD JESUS. And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, Two Men stood by them in shining garments.*—Chap. xxiii, 55; xxiv, 1 to 4.

So sacred a duty was the observance of the Sabbath held by the Jews, that the tender and affectionate offices of attention to the Manes of The DEPARTED were suspended during that day, and the whole of it dedicated unbrokenly to the worship of JEHOVAH: these Women, amidst their earnest desire to do honour to JESUS, as Man, yet remembered the Ordinance to keep the Sabbath holy. This Evangelist, in like manner as St. Mark, states that they found the stone rolled away: but it seems there were other Women then with the Marys: and this is a corroborating circumstance, that the description of Both these Evangelists applied to the second visit of the Marys to the Sepulchre on this morning of the third day. But this Evangelist mentions *Two Men*, as the Intelligencers from Heaven of CHRIST'S Resurrection. These, however, were Spiritual and not Natural Bodies, and might appear more or less in number to different Persons, or to the same Persons at different times.

St. John is even less minute, till he himself took part in the investigation; and then he is happily copious: of What he had seen he mostly wished to bear record. This is the record he has left: *The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the Sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the Sepulchre.*—John xx, 1. He thus merely states what Mary, in her eagerness to disclose the Important Fact, had communicated: and then he goes on to say, *Then she runneth and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other Disciple, whom JESUS Loved.*—Chap. xx, 2. This is the modest, but endeared appellation round which this Apostle's preference is thrown. True, indeed, CHRIST Bore Love, a Love surpassing knowledge, to All Men; but the Love St. John experienced from Him must have been Peculiar, at least St. John so thought It.

St. Matthew's description of the appearance of the Angel in some respects corresponds with that given by the Prophet Daniel, in the narrative of his Vision, where he says, *Behold, a certain Man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz; his Body also was like the beryl, and his Face as the appearance of lightning, and his Eyes as lamps of fire, and his Arms and his Feet like in colour to polished brass, and the Voice of his Words like the voice of a Multitude. And I, Daniel, alone saw the Vision; for the Men, that were with me, saw not the Vision; but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves.*—Dan. x, 5 to 7. And hence is support derived to a preceding observation, that Supernatural Appearances may be differently observed, or have a different effect upon different minds at the same time.

And the Angel answered, and said unto the Women, "Fear not ye! for I know that ye seek JESUS, Which was Crucified! He is not here; for He is Risen, as He Said: come, see the Place Where The LORD Lay! and go quickly and tell His Disciples that He is Risen from the Dead! And, behold, He Goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see Him. Lo! I have told you." And they departed quickly from the Sepulchre with fear and great joy: and did run to bring His Disciples word.—5 to 8.

He, that struck awe and terror into the minds of the Soldiery, for they are represented to have been so overwhelmed with amazement as to have seemed

like lifeless corpses, spoke in the tone and with the words of consolation to the meek-hearted Women, the faithful Followers of The MESSIAH.

Through the Power of The SPIRIT, the hearts of these Women were laid open to this Spiritual Messenger; and he saw them full of the tenderest anxiety for his LORD and their LORD: he needed not that they should declare unto him their object in approaching the Sepulchre: for He, That had Sent him, being The GOD, in Whom all Knowledge Dwells, had Imparted the bosom secret. "*Fear not ye! for I know that ye seek JESUS, Which was Crucified: He is not here!*" It is clear, therefore, from hence, that these Women had not then looked into the Sepulchre; for, adds the Angel, "*He is Risen, as He Said:* [Matt. xii, 40; xvi, 21; xvii, 23; xx, 19,] *Come, see the Place Where The LORD Lay!*" HE had previously Risen, and, probably, in the first instant of the Third Day; but the Manner of His Rising, by What Operation of The GODHEAD, and whether Attended by Angels, is not Made known to us: since such knowledge, of so Highly Spiritualized a Character, like the Heavenly Vision to St. Paul, might be beyond the power of Human utterance. But What was Essential for us to know has been sufficiently Revealed: namely, That CHRIST did Rise Victorious over Death and Hell; and that Where He is, we may be also. Foremost in offices of love towards the Fallen JESUS, the Women were Made the first acquainted with, and the first Messengers to the Disciples of, the Most Exulting Fact of His having Fulfilled His Prophetic Assurances by Rising from the Grave. And though those Disciples had shrunk from openly avowing their Connection with The LORD of Life and Glory; yet GOD, in His Mercy, on their repentance, Put away their sin, and Restored to them the Love and the Presence of their MASTER, their REDEEMER, and their KING: for not only were the Women Selected to announce the Resurrection of JESUS, but to add the heart-gladdening Tidings to His Disciples, that He would Appear unto them in that same Galilee, whence they had followed Him, to see, as they thought, the last of Him on Earth. On the Prophecy having been Fulfilled, the two Mary's (though they had not themselves yet seen The SAVIOUR in His Triumph over the Grave,) unhesitatingly relied; and with some remains of that fear, which had naturally and irresistibly affected them at the Angelic Vision they had seen, but mingled with sensations of the purest Spiritual gratification at the result of it, they hastened to impart the joyful tidings to their LORD'S Disciples; and their anxiety to do so, led them into that action of speed, which only fear or love usually excites in the Female of sedate character.

△ St. Mark's account is thus: *And he (the Angel,) saith unto them, "Be not affrighted! ye seek JESUS of Nazareth, Which was Crucified: HE is Risen: He is not here: behold the Place, Where they laid Him! But go your way; tell His Disciples and Peter, that He Goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see Him, as He Said unto you"* [Matthew xxvi, 32]. *And they went out quickly, and fled from the Sepulchre; for they trembled and were amazed: neither said they any thing to any Man; for they were afraid.*—Chap. xvi, 6 to 8.

This Evangelist confines his description of the influence, which the transaction had on the minds of the Marys exclusively to fear; but however awful might have been the impression left by it, it is impossible but that some, and that no inconsiderable portion of joy must have been mingled at the assurance of their beloved LORD'S Resurrection, and of the approaching Fulfilment of His Prophetic Promise of His again Appearing to them. Their observance of silence towards All then surrounding or in the neighbourhood of the Sepulchre, is a conviction of their prompt belief in the Angel's assertion and of their as ready obedience of his injunction. The particular mention of Peter, but after the general inclusion of the other Disciples, is an earnest of the tender feeling of

that Apostle's failing in the hour of severe trial, and of The SAVIOUR'S Forgiveness of the denial, which wrung such bitter tears of penitence from him.

St. Luke thus records This Important Incident: *And as they (the Women,) were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the Earth, the two Angels said to them, "Why seek ye the Living among the Dead? HE is not here; but is Risen! Remember how He Spake unto you, when He was yet in Galilee, [Matt. xvi, 21,] Saying, 'The SON of Man must be Delivered into the hands of sinful Men, and be Crucified: and the Third Day Rise again.'"* And they remembered His Words; and returned from the Sepulchre, and told all These Things unto the Eleven, and to All the Rest.—Chap. xxiv, 5 to 9.

This Evangelist thus gives an enlarged report of the Prophetic Saying Which JESUS had Made, Declaratory of the Successive Destiny which awaited Him; Precisely Revealing the ignominious character of the Death, to which He would be Subjected; and Defining the Period, when He should Arise to the Glory He Had with The FATHER before the World was; and when the Great Offering of Himself for the Salvation of fallen Man should be Consummated, and His Triumph over Sin and Satan be hailed by all the Heavenly Host. *"Why seek ye the Living among the Dead?"* How applicable is this inquiry to the infatuated Followers of the Papistical Errors, which lead their Votaries to rest on the vainly imagined influence of the reliques of those that have been canonized amongst them as Saints, instead of going at once to The Great AUTHOR of Salvation, The Very SON of GOD, Who has Promised to be with His Church, even His Faithful Servants, unto the end of the World!

And as they went to tell His Disciples, behold, JESUS Met them, Saying, "All Hail!" And they came and held Him by the Feet, and worshipped Him. Then Said JESUS unto them, "Be not afraid! Go tell My Brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see Me."—9, 10.

In manifestation of the truth of What the Angel had told them, that JESUS had Risen from the grave; that He was no longer Dead, but Alive; He Himself Appeared unto these His attached and persevering Followers, to Perfect, by actual sight of Him, the excellency of their faith, and to Crown, with Assurance, that gladness, which had been spread over their hearts, in exchange for their garments of mourning and of woe. And His Salutation was in Accordance with the Benevolence of His Character and Office, alike Calculated to expel fear and inspire reverential joy and confidence: the effect of which was exhibited in their acknowledging His DIVINE and Omnipotent NATURE; and prostrating themselves in devout and grateful worship of Him, as GOD: feeling Him to be, indeed and in truth, All they had ever cherished the hope He was Intended to be, The Promised MESSIAH. And this holy Worship JESUS did not, like the Angel that visited St. John, Injoin them not to pay to Him, but Accepted it; thereby Confirming the propriety of such its direction; thus turning their fear into love, so fervent, yet so pure, that Imagination would in vain attempt to paint it.

After Allaying the first risings of fear in their own faithful and sensitive hearts, our Adorable SAVIOUR Commissioned them to visit His Brethren in the Flesh, and Those, who were virtually Such by affection, and to awaken them to the Gracious and Distinguishing Relationship in Which The SON of The MOST HIGH, in His Glorified NATURE, still Admissively, and in Such Condescension, Stood towards them: *"Go, tell My Brethren!"* And what He thus Called His Chosen Disciples, who were the Companions of His Advent in the Flesh, He still Calleth All, who have faith in Him and in His Gracious Promises, and are willing to go where He Directs the Way. *"My Brethren!"* How poor

and utterly insignificant is the most exalted rank amongst Men, when drawn into comparison with This of being the Brother of The SON of GOD; and yet All may be advanced to That Pinnacle of Honour, and be Graced with the Insignia of That Transcendant Glory! For here, in the Christian Race, All may run; and yet All receive the Prize.

St. Mark briefly describes This Interview thus: *Now when JESUS was Risen early the first day of the week, He Appeared first to Mary Magdalene; out of whom He had Cast seven devils:* [Chap xvi, 9.] but he does not go on to relate what then passed between them.

△ St. John, however, furnishes us with a more luminous account of this Part of the Resurrection or Reappearance of JESUS, in the knowledge of which he was amongst the First of the Apostles a Sharer: for, after stating Mary Magdalene's visit to the Sepulchre, and her finding the stone taken away, he says, *Then she runneth and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other Disciple, whom JESUS Loved,* (the appellation that peculiarly applied to himself by the confidence with which our SAVIOUR Consigned His bereaved Mother to his care,) *and saith unto them, "They have taken away The LORD out of the Sepulchre; and we know not where they have laid Him!" Peter, therefore, went forth, and that other Disciple, and came to the Sepulchre; so they ran Both together; and the other Disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the Sepulchre; and he, stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in. Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the Sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie, and the napkin, that was about His Head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself. Then went in also that other Disciple which came first to the Sepulchre, and he saw and believed: for as yet they knew not [understood not] the Scripture [Ps. xvi, 10.] that He must Rise again from the Dead. Then the Disciples went away again unto their own home. But Mary stood without at the Sepulchre weeping; and, as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the Sepulchre and seeth two Angels in white sitting, the One at the head, and the Other at the feet, where the Body of JESUS had Lain: and they say unto her, "Woman, why weepest thou?" She saith unto them, "Because they have taken away my LORD, and I know not where they have laid Him!" And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw JESUS Standing; and knew not that it was JESUS. JESUS Saith unto her, "Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?" She, supposing Him to be the Gardener, saith unto Him, "Sir, if thou have borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him; and I will take Him away." JESUS Saith unto her, "Mary!" she turned herself, and saith unto Him, "RABBONI!" which is to say, "MASTER!" JESUS Saith unto her, "Touch Me not! for I am not yet Ascended to My FATHER: but go to My Brethren, and say unto them, "I Ascend unto My FATHER, and your FATHER! and to My GOD, and your GOD!" Mary Magdalene came and told the Disciples that she had seen The LORD, and that He had Spoken These Things unto her.—Chap. xx, 1 to 18.*

St. John takes no notice of the act of rolling away the stone which St. Matthew expressly states that the Marys saw the Angel do; and one way, at least, in which the accounts of the different Evangelists in this respect may be reconciled, is by supposing that Mary, distrusting what she had seen to have been a DIVINE Revelation, but imagining or fearing it to have been a phantom of her own brain, did not disclose to Peter and John the whole circumstances, but only such as would be most likely to win the two Apostles' belief. Her interview with The LORD of Life Himself, would naturally throw into a secondary rank her intercourse with the Angels, and, therefore, her communication was confined to the former Event. Peter and John notwithstanding the

Former's actual denial, and the Latter's virtual abandonment of CHRIST, were still occupied with reflections and meditations concerning Him; and were unwilling or unable to withdraw themselves from the neighbourhood where the Body was Laid; and so nigh were they to it, that Mary could even run to them from the Sepulchre: on seeing them, she breaks out into an exclamation, which, as taking no notice of the Vision she had seen, shews that she feared it might have been the delusion of her own imagination, influenced by the power of her holy love for JESUS, and of her grief for His Death. "*They have taken away my LORD, and I know not where they have laid Him!*" Even the supposed lifeless Body of CHRIST was the Object of her reverence and care; and this influence was communicated by the Women to the two Disciples; for even Peter, who was far advanced in years, lent his utmost speed to trace the Circumstance, and came running to the Sepulchre, fearless of the Watch, though composed of a Guard of armed Soldiers; about whom it does not appear that any information had been previously either given or sought: and John, unmindful of the reverence usually paid to Age, not only did not lend his support to Peter, but left him in the rear by his greater fleetness. There is a minuteness in this part of the Narrative, which is forcibly supportive of the accuracy of the whole.

St. Luke notices this visit of St. Peter to the Sepulchre, though less circumstantially, thus: *It was Mary Magdalene and Joanna, and Mary the Mother of James, and other Women, that were with them, which told These Things unto the Apostles: and their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not. Then arose Peter, and ran unto the Sepulchre, and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves; and departed, wondering in himself at That Which was Come to Pass.*—Chap. xxiv, 10 to 12. And the effect produced by this visit, in exciting surprise and setting the mind on conjecture, is perfectly natural, and shews an absence of design, manifesting a disposition to wait the development of Circumstances with patience.

St. John says of himself, *that he saw and believed*; and he refers to the Prophecy, in the Psalms, of CHRIST'S Resurrection, as then, for the first time, fully understood by him in Its Fulfilment; but he does not expressly say, that Peter was as readily open to conviction of the Truth: though this is rather to be drawn as inference from his Narrative: yet still, perhaps, this was but the first Dawn of faith Therein, and the Fulness of Its Light may not have been upon them, till CHRIST Appeared before them in the Fulness of Spiritual Power, though the gradual Advances of That Light were not particularized by the Evangelist: for the mere finding the grave-clothes remaining, and the Body Gone, would not in themselves lead to a conclusion that the Spirit had Reanimated the Body, and, therefore, that by DIVINE Power It had Arisen. And St. John does not thus far, at least, furnish any ground for supposing a Particular Revelation to Which implicit faith had been attached: for it is not till afterwards, at the 11th and following verses, that he relates the Vision, which appeared to Mary Magdalene; though by some Expositors this is considered an inaccuracy in the order of narration, he making this Event, though prior in occurrence, give place to that part of the Incident in which he was personally engaged. The word "But" which is introductory to the Narrative respecting Mary, seems to connect it with the preceding passage, and, indeed, to contrast it with it, rendering it, therefore, as being principally in the present tense, secondary to what had happened respecting the Disciples. It must have been after the stone was removed, since she looked into the Sepulchre and saw the grave-clothes; and her being then found weeping, is to be accounted for by her fears having supplanted her hopes, and her incredulity requiring, for its removal,




a sight of the Body of JESUS either Alive or Dead. On the appearance of the Vision, she continues under the same influence, accusing the Enemies of CHRIST of having taken away His Body. Even the Presence of JESUS did not at once relieve her from that fear; but the weakness of her faith made manifest the strength of her affection: the violence of her grief continued, and her anxiety is chiefly to know whither the Dead Body of her LORD is removed. In the total absence of all expectation of CHRIST'S Resurrection, she addresses even Himself, mistaking Him for the Gardener, and urges Him to disclose the fact, fastening her suspicion on Him as either the Actor or an Accessory; avowing, at the same time, that her object was to take charge of the Body herself. But when JESUS Made Himself Known to her by His Gracious and Familiar Style of Address, she hailed Him by His wonted Appellation, rushing to do Him reverence and pay Him worship, attempting, in the impulse of her devotedness, to embrace His Feet. But this attempt The REDEEMER Restraints; intimating that the Fulness of His Asserted GODHEAD Awaited the Glory of His Ascension. HE, however, Commissions her to communicate with His Disciples, and, in Terms the most universally Consolatory and Encouraging, to go unto them, whom He, in the Largeness of His Love, Denominates "*His Brethren*," and say unto them, (to use His Own Words,) "*I Ascend unto My FATHER and your FATHER, and to My GOD and your GOD!*" And for the universality of That Phrase, "*My Brethren*," St. Paul is an Authority, who, speaking of Them, that love GOD, as Predestinated by Him to be Conformed to the Image of His SON, adds, *that He might be The First-Born among many Brethren*.—Rom. viii, 28, 29. And the Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews (most probably St. Paul,) writes, *We see JESUS, Who was Made a little Lower than the Angels for the Suffering of Death, Crowned with Glory and Honour, that He, by the Grace of GOD, should Taste Death for every Man: for it Became Him, for Whom are All Things and by Whom are All Things, in Bringing many Sons unto Glory, to Make The CAPTAIN of their Salvation Perfect through Sufferings. For both He, That Sanctifieth, and they, who are Sanctified, are All of One. For Which Cause He is not Ashamed to Call them Brethren, Saying, [Ps. xxii, 22.] "I will Declare Thy Name unto My Brethren; in the midst of the Church will I Sing Praise unto Thee."*—Heb. ii, 9 to 12.

If we have love towards CHRIST, like that of Mary, then, like her, shall we have faith in the Resurrection of CHRIST, as the Seal to the Testimony of the Sufficiency of His Sacrifice to Bring us into Holy Brotherhood and Communion with all Saints and with Him, as The CAPTAIN of our Salvation, unto His FATHER and our FATHER, to His GOD and our GOD. For CHRIST had before Declared, "*I Came forth from The FATHER, and am Come unto the World:*" again, "*I Leave the World, and Go to The FATHER.*" [John xvi, 28.] And St. Paul speaks of The FATHER as The GOD of JESUS CHRIST, saying, *I, after I heard of your faith* (addressing the Ephesian Converts,) *in The LORD JESUS, and love unto all the Saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers, that The GOD of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, The FATHER of Glory, may Give unto you the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation in the knowledge of Him; the eyes of your understanding being Enlightened, that ye may know What is the Hope of His Calling, and What the Riches of the Glory of His Inheritance in the Saints, and What is the Exceeding Greatness of His Power to usward, who believe, according to the Working of His Mighty Power Which He Wrought in CHRIST, when He Raised Him from the Dead, and Set Him at His Own Right Hand in the Heavenly Places, Far Above all Principality and Power and Might and Dominion, and every Name, that is named, not only in this World, but also in That, Which is to Come; and hath put All Things under*

*His Feet, and Gave Him to be The HEAD over All Things to the Church, Which is His Body; the Fulness of HIM That Filleth All in All.*—Eph. i, 15 to 23.

Such is the rich Fruit to all Believers of That Resurrection of CHRIST, as the Confirmation of the Reality of His DIVINITY and the Efficacy of His Mediation, Which was thus first announced to that Mary, from whom CHRIST, as The CLEANSER from all unrighteousness, had Cast out seven demoniacal possessions. And Which Privilege equally belongs unto All, that will come unto Him in Spirit and in truth, in faith and in love, that they also may be Purified by Him and Sanctified through Him by The HOLY GHOST, to be Made Meet Partakers of the Mercies of The HEAVENLY FATHER, and be Advanced to the Inheritance of the Saints in Light, in the Favour and amidst the Visible Glories of THE GODHEAD; living here in that Sustaining Hope, and dying in the prospective enjoyment of an immediate Translation to That Blissful Communion, Which will unite the Glorified Spirit of Man to the Incarnate Glories of The SON of GOD in the Band of Spiritual Brotherhood and in Fellowship with the Graces of The HOLY GHOST.

Now when they were going, behold, Some of the Watch came into the City, and shewed unto the Chief Priests All the Things That were Done. And when they were assembled, with the Elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the Soldiers, saying, "Say ye, 'his Disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept;' and if this come to the Governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you." So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.—11 to 15. 


St. John expressly declares that Mary Magdalene informed the Disciples of What had passed, as she had received Direction; but St. Matthew leaves this to reasonable conclusion, for he says, *Now when they* (the two Marys) *were going*; and after breaking out into the Narrative of the conspiracy between the Guard and the Chief Priests, he describes the Disciples as going into Galilee according to The LORD'S Appointment.

St. Mark thus relates this circumstance: *Now when JESUS was Risen early the first day of the week, He Appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had Cast seven devils; and she went and told them, that had been with Him, as they mourned and wept: and they, when they had heard that He was Alive, and had been seen of her, believed not.*—Chap. xvi, 9 to 11. And this reported incredulity of the Disciples is strengthened by St. Luke's narrative; who, after relating the visit of the Women to the Sepulchre, and the expostulation of the Angels with them, saying, "*Why seek ye The Living among the Dead? HE is not here, but is Risen: remember how He Spake unto you, when he was yet in Galilee, Saying, 'The SON of Man must be Delivered into the hands of sinful Men, and be Crucified, and the third day Rise again.'*" (adds,) *and they remembered His Words, and returned from the Sepulchre, and told All These Things unto the Eleven, and to All the Rest.* And the Evangelist then goes on to state, *It was Mary Magdalene and Joanna, and Mary the Mother of James, and other Women, that were with them, which told These Things unto the Apostles; and their words seemed to them as idle tales; and they believed them not.*—Chap. xxiv, 5 to 11. But how much soever the Disciples at first doubted, (and the slowness of their belief is a pregnant proof of its ultimate sincerity,) that doubtfulness, as we shall hereafter see, was effectually removed, and the Resurrection of CHRIST became the very Foundation of that Faith, which was manifested with the most undaunted and persevering firmness and fortitude to the end of All their Lives. Whatever shades of difference may be traced in the several Narratives of the Circumstances attending the Resurrection of our SAVIOUR; in the Fact itself, all the Evangelists most expressly and unequivocally agree; and This Fact, it

may be considered, was the Great Object they exultingly proclaimed and boldly announced in all their discourses and writings.

The account of the subtle contrivance of the chief Priests to explain the absence of watchfulness in the Guard, a Guard too of their own choosing, and acting under their special and express instructions to be unceasingly alert through the three days at least, is peculiar to St. Matthew; but the existence of the traditionary admission of it, as an actual occurrence, must have been known to Many, to whom the Gospel, according to that Evangelist, had been submitted; and, had the assertion been without foundation, it would have been open to detection and contradiction. This, therefore, is one ground of giving credit to it; and the probabilities in its support are, that if a Watch were set for the avowed purpose of preventing imposition on the Public credulity, by the removal of the dead Body from the Grave, and, if the Parties, selecting and setting the Watch, impressed them with the idea of such a removal being likely to give currency to a Religion, which had been cried down by the Authorities, and The FOUNDER of which was executed as a Blasphemer, some cause must have occasioned the Guards' absence from their post; and this cause is sufficiently inferable from the terror with which the Presence of Supernatural Power, in the appearance of Angels, would overwhelm them: for, daring as they might be in the hour of Human conflict, they would feel powerless and without help, when, amidst the convulsion of the natural World around them, Beings of an unapproachable Order came upon the whirlwind; and hence they would gladly hasten from a Scene so awful and so beyond their comprehension in its further effects. They must, however, in some way account for their relinquishing their duty, especially at the very time when most expected to fulfil it: but the publication of the fact would have brought temporal destruction, at least, to the hopes, if not to the power and privileges of the chief Priests; and as the Latter felt that some reason must be assigned to the Community of Jews for the indisputable fact of the Body of the Crucified JESUS being no longer in the Sepulchre, in which It had been so secured, they, in the absurdity of Human council, when dictated by evil motives and yielding to corrupt ones, prompt, with a truth-blinding bribe, the Soldiery to say that they slept on their post, and in that interval the Body was stolen; though the continuance of the Watch could not have been more than six and thirty hours, since it was not till after sun-set on the Friday that CHRIST was Buried, and before sun-rise on the Sunday He was not in the Sepulchre: and can it be supposed that All and every One of such a Watch, (which was permitted to be a strong one,) so constituted and so cautiously instructed, should neglect such a duty, when their Lives, under military discipline, would be put in jeopardy by such neglect? Or is it less improbable that the Disciples, who shrunk from acknowledging CHRIST when Living, should, at the almost certain hazard of their Lives, seek to obtain His Dead Body; since, to get at It, an immense stone was to be removed, and a long and tedious process to be gone through, which, in all Human probability, would have awakened the Guard, however soundly they might previously have slept, and the consequence of such a stealthy movement would most certainly have been instant destruction to its Perpetrators on detection. If, therefore, the Disciples had been bent upon obtaining the Body at all events, Self-defence would have prompted (reasoning as Man reasoneth,) their waiting the withdrawal of the Guard, for bribery was out of the question, since silver and gold they had none; and, indeed, why should they seek to disturb the Body, when It had, at least, been honoured by such a place of Sepulture? for *HE Made His Grave with the Rich*. To have removed His Body from so honourable a deposit, would have been to degrade It: and so little idea had His Disciples of His

Rising again, at least so early as the third day, that they would not believe the assertion of It as fact, notwithstanding that assertion was made by Those, whom they held in high esteem, and whose veracity, in general, they least doubted.

Then the Eleven Disciples went away into Galilee, into a Mountain, where JESUS had Appointed them. And when they saw Him, they worshipped Him: but Some doubted.—16, 17. 

Some observations have been before offered on the first of these verses, as proving, though indirectly, that the Women did, as they were directed by CHRIST to do, “go and tell the Disciples to return to Galilee, that there they might see Him.” And though the Disciples might reasonably have wondered at the narrative, given them by the Marys, of CHRIST’S Resurrection, and withheld themselves from an unqualified belief of It, yet it seems that they thought It deserving their attention, since One and All of the remaining Apostles went whither they had been told, not only into Galilee, but to a particular Mount in that Province, waiting to see what would there occur. And there, as He had Promised, did CHRIST also Repair, and Appear unto them: and on the first view of Him they All, Bodily at least, prostrated themselves in adoration before Him; though Some, but only Some, in spirit still hesitated to trust either their own senses, or, at least, to acknowledge Him as GOD, or to be The SON, Co-Equal with The FATHER, as Touching THE GODHEAD; conceiving, perhaps, that they might have been, as it were, in a dream, having their imaginations peculiarly worked upon; or that He, Who was before them, might not be The Very Same JESUS, they had seen under Crucifixion. This tardiness of belief in the Disciples shews their unwillingness to become the Dupes of any deception; and it is the more demonstrative of their sincerity, as CHRIST had Himself Told them, before He Went up to Jerusalem, not only that He must Suffer Death, but that He should, nevertheless, *Rise again, and would Go before them into Galilee.*—Matt. xxvi, 32.

St. Mark’s Description of the Appearance of our SAVIOUR, after His Resurrection, is more extended; for, in addition to that before observed upon, to Mary Magdalene he says, *After that He Appeared in Another Form unto Two of the Disciples, as they walked and went into the Country. And they went and told It unto the Residue; neither believed they them. Afterward He Appeared unto the Eleven, as they sat at meat, and Upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them, which had seen Him after He was Risen.*—Chap. xvi, 12 to 14.

This narrative by St. Mark is not only corroborated, but illustrated, by St. Luke as follows: *And, behold, Two of the Disciples (Simon and Cleopas,) went that same day to a Village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs; and they talked together of All These Things, Which had Happened. And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, JESUS Himself Drew near, and Went with them: but their eyes were holden, that they should not know Him. And He Said unto them, “What manner of communications are these that ye have, One to Another, as ye walk and are sad?” And the One of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering, said unto Him, “Art thou only a Stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the Things, Which are Come to Pass there in these days?” And He Said unto them, “What things?” And they said unto Him, “Concerning JESUS of Nazareth, Which was a PROPHET Mighty in Deed and Word before GOD and all the People: and how the chief Priests and our Rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and have Crucified Him. But we trusted that it had been He, Which should have Redeemed Israel. And beside All This, to-day is the third day, since These Things*

were done: yea, and certain Women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the Sepulchre; and when they found not His Body, they came, saying, 'That they had also seen a Vision of Angels, which said that He was Alive.' And Certain of them, which were with us, went to the Sepulchre, and found it even so as the Women had said; but Him they saw not." Then He Said unto them, "O Fools, and slow of heart to believe All That the Prophets have spoken! Ought not CHRIST to have Suffered These Things, and to enter into His Glory?" And Beginning at Moses and All the Prophets, He Expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the Things concerning Himself. And they drew nigh unto the Village, whither they went; and He Made as though He would have Gone further: but they constrained Him, saying, "Abide with us; for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." And He went in to Tarry with them. And it came to pass, as He Sat at meat with them, He Took bread and Blessed it, and Brake, and Gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew Him. And He Vanished out of their sight. And they said One to Another, "Did not our heart burn within us, while He Talked with us by the way, and while He Opened to us the Scriptures?" And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the Eleven gathered together, and them, that were with them, saying, "The LORD is Risen indeed, and hath Appeared to Simon." And they told What Things were Done in the way, and how He was Known of them in Breaking of Bread. And as they thus spake, JESUS Himself Stood in the midst of them, and Saith unto them, "Peace be unto you." But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a Spirit. And He Said unto them, "Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold My Hands and My Feet, that it is I Myself! Handle Me, and see! for a Spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me Have." And when He had thus Spoken, He Shewed them His Hands and His Feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, He Said unto them, "Have ye here any meat?" And they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and of a honey comb: and He Took it and did eat before them. And He Said unto them, "These are the Words, Which I Spake unto you, while I was yet with you, That All Things must be Fulfilled, Which were Written in the Law of Moses and in the Prophets and in the Psalms concerning Me." Then Opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, and Said unto them, "Thus it is Written, and Thus it Behoved CHRIST to Suffer, and to Rise from the Dead the third day."—Chap. xxiv, 13 to 46.

Thus have the Evangelists most circumstantially detailed the Appearance of our SAVIOUR to His Disciples, both separately and collectively, after His Crucifixion, and in a manner so natural and beautiful, as to convey instruction, as well as conviction, to every feeling and well-disposed heart; and affording, to the devout Believer in CHRIST, That holy Consolation Which the Triumph of An INTERCESSOR, through the acknowledged necessity and sufficiency of the Mediatorial Sacrifice, is so Calculated to Afford, and to justify the hope both of Pardon and Reconciliation from A GOD of Mercy and of Truth. Our SAVIOUR Saying, that He would Appear to His Disciples in Galilee, was not Saying, He would no where else Appear unto them: and St. John (as we shall afterwards see, as well as St. Matthew,) bears testimony to His eventually Meeting the Disciples in Galilee. It seems these Disciples, one of whom had even been at the Sepulchre, were going from Jerusalem to an adjoining Village; and, having their minds full of the Events That had so recently Occurred, as Relating to their beloved, though Departed LORD and MASTER, made Them the Subject of their conversation; but amidst much of doubt and uncertainty, that hung about them, scarcely knowing what even to think, much more what with confidence to believe; and whilst freely but reverently discussing the

varied and deeply interesting Matters, JESUS, agreeably to the Gracious Assurance He had Given before His Death, that *where Two or Three are gathered together in His Name, there would He be in the midst of them*, [Matt. xviii, 20.] Joined Himself to these two Christian Communicants; and though at first their eyes were not Spiritually conscious of His Presence, yet, with the feeling of Christian Brotherhood and Fellowship, they entered into conversation with Him, suffering Him, though an imagined Stranger, to question them on the subject of their conference, on which they seemed so earnestly intent; for the interest which they took Therein must have attracted observation, and the gloom and sorrow which their countenances betrayed, bespoke the feeling of disappointment they were labouring under. The love and veneration they thus indirectly manifested for their crucified MASTER, even after His Power on Earth had seemed to cease, must have gladdened The SAVIOUR'S Spirit, and reminds us of Joseph yearning in his bowels to make himself known to his Brethren. For, though Aware of all that had passed in their previous intercourse and inmost thoughts, JESUS Restrained Himself from Revealing, for a time, His Real Character to them; Making as though He were only an Onward Traveller, and a Stranger to the Matters on Which their minds were brooding. But not to these Disciples only, and the workings of their hearts, was CHRIST, as Very GOD, Actually Present. To All, and Each of us, in every situation, at every season, and under every circumstance, in all we do, or say, or think, is CHRIST fully Conversant thereof; nor can any thing be kept secret from Him, with Whom we shall have to do as our JUDGE, and The DISPOSER of our Eternal Destiny. Yet we, like the Travellers to Emmaus, heed not The DIVINE Presence about our paths, nor His SPIRIT'S having Acquaintance with all our ways; and though our REDEEMER Ever Draweth Nigh unto us, how rarely are we led, in Spirit and in truth and reverential love, to draw nigh unto Him! How rarely do we seek to hold Communion with Him! How faintly is the fire stirred within our hearts, when He Speaks forth, with the Promise of Salvation, unto All, who in faith come unto Him! Oh! that we would be wise and take heed to our ways, and to the bent of our intercourse and communings with our Fellow-Mortals; remembering that a Day is approaching, in Which All will be Revealed by the full and faithful Record thereof being Brought forth; when all the occurrences in our journey through life, and the effects, however remote or intermixed or various, that have sprung from them as causes, will be developed, and both the outer and inner Man will be exhibited to the view of Angels and of Men. How will it then bring gladness unspeakably to the Soul, to be conscious of having sorrowed with a godly sorrow, like unto those sad Disciples, at the Sufferings of JESUS, Which our own sins had rendered Indispensable, but had aggravated: for then shall we partake the Full Efficacy of His Graciously Expiatory Sacrifice and Meritorious Intercession. Hence we learn What are the communings in which we should engage, that they may be Blessed with the conscious and Instructive Presence of The SPIRIT of Grace and DIVINE Wisdom, through the Love of CHRIST, even the Character and Offices of The Only and HOLY SON of GOD, as The MESSIAH, and His Unbounded Tenderness towards us, as to Seek, by Such a Sacrifice of Himself, the Salvation and Glorification of our Immortal Souls.

Even the Disciples at this time, it seems, looked upon JESUS only as a Prophet: but how inadequate would the sacrifice of any Created Being, however holy, but especially Man, in his fallen and Graceless state, have been, by the most protracted life of suffering and patience under it, and of perseverance in well-doing, to have not only expiated the enormous and crying offences of a

whole World of Beings engrossed with the pleasures or absorbed with the pride and ambition of the World, and thereby to have satisfied Eternal Justice, but to have obtained the inconceivable Blessing for us of the Outpouring of Happiness, amidst Heavenly Holiness, without measure and without end! Obedience to the Will of GOD constitutes one of the most cherished privileges of Angels, and in its observance they experience the truest and purest delight, as insuring The DIVINE Favour, Which they must be conscious Surpasses in Its Effects, infinitely, any order of Merit they, with their unbending powers, could reach: what then could even they do to pay the full Price of an equal advancement to Celestial Joy of an inferior Order of Being? How much less Man for Man, since who, amongst all the Sons of Men, hath perfected obedience in the way of holiness, or could assume to pay the ransom of his Brother from the penalty of sin? But when The SON of GOD and The SON of Man are Made One, and by the Hallowedness of Such an Union a Nature of Perfect Purity is Presented, and Made a Free-Will Offering of Atonement in Expiation of Human sin and in Reconciliation of The DIVINE Favour; Justice is thus Satisfied, and Requires only a thankful and cordial adoption of Such a Merciful Intercession to Render It Efficacious: and to the faithful Soul a reasonable hope, not only of Salvation from the Punishment for sin, but of an Adoption to Heavenly Communion and the Perpetual Experience of A SAVIOUR'S Love arises. The Prophet Ezekiel hath thus declared the inefficacy of Man's righteousness to save more than his own Soul even from temporal judgments, saying, *The Word of The LORD Came again to me, Saying, Son of Man, when the Land sinneth against Me, by trespassing grievously, then will I Stretch out Mine Hand upon it, and will Break the staff of the bread thereof, and will Send Famine upon it, and will Cut off Man and beast from it: though these three Men, Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it, they should deliver but their own Souls by their Righteousness," Saith The LORD GOD.*—Ezek. xiv, 12 to 14. But A GREATER than These was here; for of His Forerunner, John the Baptist, He Declared, that *he was more than a Prophet*; whilst John disclaimed comparative worthiness even to take off The MESSIAH'S Shoe latchet; and that, *though the Law came by Moses, Grace and Truth Came by JESUS CHRIST*; in Whom are Fulfilled the hope and the trust of Jews and Gentiles, in that He hath Redeemed Israel, and Made All true Believers One Church, of Which He is The BISHOP and The PRIEST. And thus may we, with the venerable Father of the Baptist, exultingly say, *Blessed be The LORD GOD of Israel, for He hath Visited and Redeemed His People.*—Luke i, 68. This observation of the Disciples shews, as do various other Passages in Scripture, that A REDEEMER was then looked for by the Jews: "*We trusted that it had been He, Which should have Redeemed Israel!*" But even the Best among them seem to have thought less of the captivity by Satan, than of the Roman yoke. The Disciples, even before the Resurrection of JESUS, acknowledged Him to be a *Prophet, mighty in deed and word before GOD and all the People. No Man can do These Things, that Thou Doest, unless GOD be with him!* was the speech addressed to Him by a Pharisee and Ruler. And yet, if CHRIST were not more than a Prophet, and were not even GOD Himself, He would be amenable to the charge of blasphemy brought against Him by the Priests and Scribes; and He would have perverted from a right worship and a sound faith the most pure and upright amongst Mankind, and this even from Generation to Generation, from the period of His Advent in the Flesh until the end of the World; introducing a system of worship contrary to the Purpose and Will of JEHOVAH, and, consequently, in its pursuit pernicious to Man. But that JESUS was The CHRIST, and that through Him Alone we have

Remission of our sins, and are encouraged to rejoice in the hope of His Glory as GOD, we are justified in believing, and should pray, without ceasing, to confirm our faith in that Glorious hope.

To these Disciples the Women declared the Vision they had seen at the Sepulchre; and the Fact both of That and of the investigation made by the Disciples into the circumstances is thus further corroborated. The Expostulation of our SAVIOUR for the tardiness with which His DIVINITY was believed, though so fully Foretold in Holy Writ, as well as Ratified by the Supernatural Excellency and Wonder of His Wisdom and His Works, Applies with equal force to us, if our faith in Him generate not in us a holy love towards Him, and a hearty desire to follow His Precepts and, as far as may be, adopt His Example. But in Addressing us as "Fools, or Unwise," He Speaks not in the Spirit of rancour, but to Awaken us to a deeper attention to the surpassing Importance of the Truths He Utters in the Gracious Message of Salvation He Conveys, Striving to Induce us to exchange the wisdom of this World, which is foolishness before GOD, for That Wisdom, Which is from Above.

The same Exposition of the Scriptures, as foretelling the Sacrifice, Which CHRIST was necessarily to Make for Man's Redemption, Paul also dwelt upon, in his reasoning, for three successive Sabbaths, with the Jews assembled in their Synagogue at Thessalonica, opening unto their intellectual view the Same Divine Source of Knowledge, and alleging and proving, to the conviction of Many, both Jews and Greeks, Men and Women, that for the Fulfilment of Prophecy CHRIST must Needs have Suffered, and have Risen again from the Dead; and that The JESUS, Whom Paul preached unto them, was indeed The CHRIST, The True MESSIAH.—Acts xvii, 3, 4.

St. Peter also, in congratulating his Converts on the Blessed Hope, Set before them, of attaining unto and shortly receiving the end of their faith, even the Salvation of their Immortal Souls, adds, *Of which Salvation the Prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the Grace That should Come: searching what, or what manner of time The SPIRIT of CHRIST, Which was in them, did Signify, when It Testified before hand the Sufferings of CHRIST and the Glory That should Follow.*—1 Peter i, 9 to 11.

The Passages of Scripture, which, as having the most obvious relation to Himself, it may be supposed CHRIST Brought under His Disciples' view on This Occasion, (though this, as well as the peculiar Nature and Manner of His Exposition of Them, can only be matter for conjecture, since the Evangelists have bequeathed to us but the general assertion,) are the following; and the very search after Them seems peculiarly calculated to enlarge the Inquirer's acquaintance with the most Valuable of all Knowledge: [Gen. iii, 14, 15,] *And The LORD GOD Said unto the Serpent, "Because thou hast done this, (induced the first Parents of Mankind to disobey The DIVINE Commands,) thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field: upon thy belly shalt thou go; and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life! And I will Put enmity between thee and the Woman, and between thy Seed and her SEED: It shall Bruise thy head; and thou shalt bruise his heel."* [Gen. xxii, 15, 16, 18,] *And the Angel of The LORD called unto Abraham out of Heaven, and said, "By Myself have I Sworn, Saith The LORD, That in Thy SEED shall All the Nations of the Earth be Blessed."* [Gen. xxvi, 4,] where the same Words are Addressed to Isaac, Abraham's Child of Promise. [Gen. xlix, 10,] where it is Prophetically revealed by Jacob, the Son of Isaac, that *The Sceptre Should not depart from Judah, nor a Law Giver from between his feet, until SHILOH Came; and unto Him should the Gathering of the People be.* [Deut. v, 1; xviii, 15,] *And Moses called all Israel, and said unto them, "The LORD, thy*



GOD, will Raise up unto thee A PROPHET from the midst of thee, of thy Brethren, Like unto me: unto Him ye shall hearken." [Psalm xvi, 9, 10,] As the Prophetic View of the Royal Psalmist, allusive to The MESSIAH'S Triumph over Death and the Grave: *My Heart is Glad, and My Glory Rejoiceth: My Flesh also shall Rest in Hope; for Thou wilt not Leave My Soul in hell; neither wilt Thou Suffer Thine HOLY ONE to See corruption.*" So throughout almost the xxii Psalm, but particularly verses 1. 6 to 8. 15 to 18: "*MY GOD! MY GOD! Why hast Thou Forsaken Me? I am a worm, and no Man; a Reproach of Men, and Despised of the People. All they, that see Me, laugh Me to scorn; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, 'He trusted in The LORD, that He would Deliver him: let Him Deliver him, seeing he delighted in Him.'*" *MY Strength is dried up like a potsherd; and My Tongue Cleaveth to My Jaws; and Thou hast Brought Me into the dust of Death: for dogs have compassed Me; the assembly of the Wicked have inclosed Me: they pierced My Hands and My Feet: I may Tell all My Bones: they look and stare upon Me: they part My Garments among them, and cast lots upon My Vesture.*" [Psalm cxxxii, 11,] THE LORD hath Sworn in Truth unto David: He will not Turn from It: "*Of the FRUIT of thy Body will I Set upon thy Throne.*" [Isa. vii, 14,] The LORD Himself shall Give you A Sign: "*Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a SON, and shall call His Name 'IMMANUEL.'*" [Isa. ix, 2. 6, 7,] The People, that walked in darkness, have seen A Great Light: For unto us A CHILD is Born, unto us A SON is Given! And the Government shall be upon His Shoulder; and His Name shall be Called WONDERFUL, COUNSELLER, The MIGHTY GOD, The Everlasting FATHER, The PRINCE of Peace. Of the Increase of His Government and Peace there shall be no end: upon the Throne of David and upon his Kingdom to Order It and to Establish It with Judgment and with Justice from henceforth even for Ever. The Zeal of The LORD of Hosts will Perform This. [Isa. xl, 1 to 5. 9 to 11,] "*Comfort ye, comfort ye, My People! Saith your GOD! Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem! and cry unto her, That her Warfare is Accomplished! That her iniquity is Pardoned! For she hath received of The LORD'S Hand Double for all her sins. The voice of him, that crieth in the Wilderness, 'Prepare ye the Way of The LORD! make straight in the Desert a Highway for our GOD! Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain. And the Glory of The LORD shall be Revealed; and All Flesh shall see It together, For the Mouth of The LORD hath Spoken It. O Zion, that bringest Good Tidings, get thee up unto the high mountain! O Jerusalem, that bringest Good Tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid! Say unto the Cities of Judah, 'Behold your GOD!' Behold, The LORD GOD will Come with Strong Hand, and His Arm shall Rule for Him: behold, His Reward is with Him, and His Work before Him! HE shall Feed His Flock like a Shepherd: He shall Gather the Lambs with His Arm, and Carry them in His Bosom; and shall Gently Lead those that are with young.*" [Isa. l, 6,] "*I Gave My Back to the Smilers, and My Cheeks to them, that plucked off the hair: I Hid not My Face from shame and spitting.*" [Isa. liii,] Who hath believed our Report? and to whom is the Arm of The LORD Revealed? For He shall Grow up before Him as a tender plant; and as a root out of a dry ground: He hath no form nor comeliness: and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty, that we should desire Him: He is despised and rejected of Men; a Man of Sorrows and Acquainted with Grief; and we hid, as it were, our faces from Him: He was despised, and we esteemed Him not! Surely He hath Borne our griefs, and Carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem Him Stricken, Smitten of GOD, and Afflicted. But He was Wounded for our transgressions; He was Bruised for our iniquities; the Chastin-

ment of our peace was upon Him; and with His Stripes we are Healed. All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every One to his own way; and The LORD hath Laid on Him the iniquity of us All! HE was Oppressed, and He was Afflicted; yet He Opened not His Mouth: He is Brought as a lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep before her Shearers is dumb, so He Openeth not His Mouth: He was Taken from Prison and from Judgment. And Who shall declare His Generation? For He was Cut off out of the Land of the Living; for the transgression of My People was He Stricken: and He Made His Grave with the Wicked; and with the Rich in His Death; because He had Done no violence; neither was any deceit in His Mouth. Yet it Pleased The LORD to Bruise Him: He hath Put Him to Grief. When Thou shalt Make His Soul an Offering for sin, He shall See His Seed; He shall Prolong His Days; and the Pleasure of The LORD shall Prosper in His Hand: He shall See of the Travail of His Soul, and shall be Satisfied. By His Knowledge shall My Righteous SERVANT Justify Many; for He shall Bear their iniquities. Therefore will I Divide Him a Portion with the Great; and He shall Divide the Spoil with the Strong: because He hath Poured out His Soul unto Death; and He was Numbered with the Transgressors: and He Bare the sin of Many, and Made Intercession for the Transgressors. [Isa. lv, 1 to 5,] "Ho! every One, that thirsteth, come ye to the Waters! and he, that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat? yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price! Wherefore do ye spend money for that, which is not bread? and your labour for that, which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto Me; and eat that which is good; and let your Soul delight itself in fatness! Incline your ear and come unto Me! hear! and your Soul shall live. And I will Make An Everlasting Covenant with you, even the Sure Mercies of David! Behold, I have Given Him for A WITNESS to the People, A LEADER and COMMANDER to the People! Behold, thou shalt call a Nation, that thou knowest not; and Nations, that knew not thee, shall run unto thee, because of The LORD, thy GOD, and for The HOLY ONE of Israel: for He hath Glorified thee." [Isa. lix, 20,] "THE REDEEMER shall Come to Zion, and unto them, that turn from transgression," Saith The LORD. [Jerem. xxiii, 5, 6,] "Behold, the Days come, Saith The LORD, that I will Raise unto David A Righteous BRANCH; and A KING shall Reign and Prosper, and shall Execute Judgment and Justice in the Earth. In His Days Judah shall be Saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and This is His Name, Whereby He shall be Called, 'THE LORD, Our RIGHTEOUSNESS.'" [Jerem. xxxiii, 14, 15,] "Behold, the Days come, Saith The LORD, that I will Perform That Good Thing, Which I have Promised unto the House of Israel and to the House of Judah. In those Days and at That Time will I Cause The BRANCH of Righteousness to Grow up unto David: and He shall Execute Judgment and Righteousness in the Land." [Ezekiel xxxiv, 20, 22, 23, 24,] Thus Saith The LORD, "I will Set up One SHEPHERD over My Flock, and He shall Feed them; even My SERVANT DAVID: He shall Feed them, and He shall be their SHEPHERD. And I, The LORD, will be their GOD; and My SERVANT DAVID A PRINCE among them. I, The LORD, have Spoken It." This Prophecy was written about 590 years before the Advent of CHRIST: but David, the King, and the sweet Psalmist of Israel, had then been dead above 400 years; it could only, therefore, have reference to The Spiritual DAVID, which is CHRIST. [Ezekiel xxxvii, 21 to 28,] Thus Saith The LORD GOD, "Behold, I will Take the Children of Israel from among the Heathen, whither they be gone, and will Gather them on every side, and Bring them into their own Land: and I will Make them one Nation in the Land upon the mountains of Israel: and One KING shall be KING to them All; and they shall be no more two Nations; neither shall they be divided into two Kingdoms any more at all:

neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things; nor with any of their transgressions. But I will Save them out of all their dwelling places, wherein they have sinned; and will Cleanse them: so shall they be My People, and I will be their GOD. And DAVID, My SERVANT, shall be KING over them; and they All shall have One SHEPHERD. They shall also walk in My Judgments, and observe My Statutes and do Them. And they shall dwell in the Land, that I have Given unto Jacob, My Servant, wherein your Fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they and their Children, and their Children's Children, for ever: and My SERVANT DAVID shall be their PRINCE for Ever. Moreover I will Make a Covenant of Peace with them; It shall be an Everlasting Covenant with them; and I will Place them and Multiply them; and will Set My Sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore: My Tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, I will be their GOD, and they shall be My People; and the Heathen shall know that I, The LORD, do Sanctify Israel, when My Sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for Evermore." [Dan. ix, 20 to 27.] Whiles I, Daniel was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin, and the sin of my People Israel, and presenting my supplication before The LORD, my GOD, for the Holy Mountain of my GOD; yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the Man (Spirit in the form of a Man,) Gabriel, whom I had seen in a Vision, being Caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation; and he informed me, and talked with me, and said, "O Daniel! I am come forth to give thee skill and understanding. At the beginning of thy supplication the Commandment Came forth; and I am come to shew thee: for thou art Greatly Beloved: therefore understand the Matter, and consider the Vision! Seventy Weeks are Determined upon thy People and upon thy Holy City, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to Make Reconciliation for iniquity, and to Bring in Everlasting Righteousness, and to Seal up the Vision and Prophecy, and to Anoint The MOST HOLY. Know, therefore, and understand, that from the Going forth of the Commandment to Restore and to Build Jerusalem unto The MESSIAH, The PRINCE, shall be seven Weeks and three score and two Weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times: and after three score and two Weeks shall MESSIAH be Cut off; but not for Himself. And the People of the Prince, that shall come, shall destroy the City and the Sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood; and unto the end of the war Desolations are Determined. And He shall Confirm the Covenant with Many for one week; and in the midst of the week He shall Cause the Sacrifice and the Oblation to Cease. and for the Overspreading of abominations He shall Make it Desolate, even until the Consummation; and, That Determined, shall be Poured upon the Desolate."

The following observations are offered with much deference. Weeks for years are here, as days in Numbers xiv, 34, and Ezekiel iv, 6, meant; and the commencement of these weeks, which would thus make 490 years, is from the 20th year of Artaxerxes, King of Persia, in the 522nd year before CHRIST; and Daniel wrote this Prophecy about the year 538 before CHRIST. The Commandment to restore and build Jerusalem, was in the reign of the Second Artaxerxes, about 445 years before CHRIST [see Nehemiah ii]. The seven weeks and three score and two weeks, making together 69 weeks of years, amount to 483 years; and the number of years that CHRIST Lived, being 33, added to the 445, amount to 478, making a difference of only 5 years: three score and two weeks, or 62 weeks of years being 434, make this nine years before the Birth of CHRIST.

△ [Micah vii, 18 to 20.] The Prophet concludes with this pious and Prophetic Effusion: *Who is A GOD, Like unto Thee, O LORD, That Pardoneth iniquity and Passeth by the transgression of the Remnant of His Heritage? HE Retaineth*

not His Anger for Ever; because He Delighteth in Mercy. HE will Turn again; He will Have Compassion upon us: He will Subdue our iniquities; and Thou wilt Cast all their sins into the depths of the Sea: Thou wilt Perform the Truth to Jacob, and the Mercy to Abraham; Which Thou hast Sworn unto our Fathers from the days of old. [Malachi iii, 1 to 3,] This Prophet Thus speaks as the Oracle of JEHOVAH: "Behold, I will Send My Messenger; and he shall Prepare the Way before Me. And The LORD, Whom ye seek, shall Suddenly Come to His Temple, even The MESSENGER of The Covenant, Whom ye delight in! Behold, He shall Come, Saith The LORD of Hosts! But who may abide the Day of His Coming? and who shall stand, when He Appareth? For He is like a Refiner's fire, and like Fullers' soap; and He shall Sit as a Refiner and Purifier of silver: and He shall Purify the Sons of Levi, and Purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto The LORD an Offering in Righteousness." [Mal. iv, 1, 2. 5, 6,] And again, "Behold, The Day Cometh, That shall Burn as an oven; and All the Proud, yea, and All, that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and The Day That Cometh, shall Burn them up! Saith The LORD of Hosts, that It shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you, that fear My Name, shall The SUN of RIGHTEOUSNESS Arise with Healing in His Wings! Behold, I will Send you Elijah, the Prophet, before the Coming of the Great and Dreadful Day of The LORD: and he shall turn the heart of the Fathers to the Children, and the heart of the Children to their Fathers, lest I Come, and Smite the Earth with a Curse."

In addition to Moses and the Psalms and the Prophets, we have the Evangelists and Apostles, All bearing testimony to JESUS being The CHRIST, The SAVIOUR; and together they form a Rock of immoveable solidity, on Which we may safely build the Establishment of our faith, and view from thence our Hope; against which the winds of Infidelity may blow, and the rains of Persecution may beat; but that Erection will stand, because it is founded on a ROCK, and because That ROCK is CHRIST. Let Each of us, therefore, say with the Father of the Lunatic, "LORD, I believe: Help Thou mine unbelief!" Give me a humble and teachable heart, and Impart unto me That Wisdom, Which may make me, not only to know, but both to will and to do That, Which Thou hast Commanded, and to believe from the heart in Those Mercies as Sure, Which have been Promised by and through The Spiritual DAVID!

The New Testament, which was not written when CHRIST Expounded to these two Disciples, in all the then Scriptures, the Things Concerning Himself, is the Key of the Prophecies in the Old. In Both The SON of GOD is Made Apparent as The SAVIOUR of the World, and as The MEDIATOR of A Covenant of Reconciliation and Glory in Immortality to every believing and penitent and contrite Soul; even if there be vital faith but as a grain of mustard seed. To Moses and the Prophets had the Apostles looked for the Manifestation of The MESSIAH: and of St. Philip it is particularly Recorded, that he said unto the pure and guileless Nathaniel; *We have found Him, of Whom Moses in the Law, and the Prophets did write, JESUS of Nazareth, The SON of Joseph.*—John i, 45. We also have, in spirit, found Him, Matured in the Great Work of His Mediation. May we so follow Him, as did Philip, and with the heart as well as words of Nathaniel, say, in reverential love, unto Him, *RABBI! Thou art The SON of GOD; Thou art The KING of Israel!* For then may we hope to see hereafter with them and with all Saints, and to rejoice with joy unspeakable at the Sight, *the Heaven Opening, and the Angels of GOD ascending and descending upon The SON of Man*, when HE shall Come in All The MAJESTY of HEAVEN to Fix the Destiny of every Soul of Human Kind [John i, 49 to 51]. As Jacob constrained the Angel of GOD, who had wrestled with him, and had a

Blessing Promised him, though unconscious of the Exalted Nature of Him, upon Whom the constraint was laid, [Gen. xxxii, 24 to 30.] so did those Disciples, though unconscious of The DIVINE NATURE of The COMPANION of their walk, in urging Him, vehemently, to Continue with them, obtain for themselves the blessed Assurance of Acceptance with GOD, by being the Cherished Companions of The SON of His Love; than Which no Higher Privilege, no Tidings of greater Joy, no Richer or Readier Restorative of Consolation and of Peace could have been afforded them. But acceptable as was the knowledge that He was with them, Who, by His Triumph over Death and the Grave, had Established His Title to be The RESURRECTION and The LIFE, we are Encouraged, by the Words He Bequeathed to every succeeding Generation, to believe that He is also Present with us in SPIRIT; and that if we honour and obey and love Him, as we ought to do, He will never Forsake us, nor Withdraw the Enlightening, Guiding, Healing, Comforting Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT from us. CHRIST would have Left the Disciples, if they had not pressed His Continuance with them: So when Walking on the Sea He would have Passed the Disciples in the ship, if they had not called to Him [Mark vi, 48]. Exertion, therefore, is thus exemplified as necessary to obtain, if we are desirous of having, the Light of His Countenance, and the Assurance of His Salvation. In Spirit we may so constrain CHRIST to Abide with us, as that we shall find Him, to Smooth our path through life, and to be our Solace even unto death: His Word, as Contained in The Holy Gospel, will be a Lantern to our feet and a Light to our paths; and He will be unto us The COUNSELLOR, and The GUIDE, and The PRINCE of Peace, as well as The MIGHTY GOD.

△ HE, Who Taught us that Man liveth not by bread alone, yet even after His Resurrection to Life Eternal, Blessed and Gave Thanks for the Bread of this life; Exemplifying the gratitude that is Acceptable to GOD; and not only Blessed Him as The GIVER of All Good Gifts, but, in the true Spirit of Christian hospitality and charity, Brake and Distributed to Those around Him [See Chapter xiv, 19.]

By The SPIRIT, That is in us, it is, that we are Enabled to discern Spiritual Things; and it is only when we veil, by fleshly desires and worldly conceptions, our sense of That Sanctifying Grace, that the consciousness of the Actual Presence as well as Providence of GOD is not with us, for, as the Apostle saith, *GOD is not Far from us; for in Him we live and move and have our Being.* But when faith in CHRIST has drawn the veil from our eyes, then shall we see Him as He is, The SAVIOUR of the World and The FRIEND of Sinners; and though not Carnally Present to us, yet will He be Obvious to our Souls' discernment and enjoyment, Pouring out to us, through the Influence of The SPIRIT, the Unction of Heavenly Hope and Consolation. The Effect which the Discourse of our SAVIOUR had upon these His Disciples, in Enkindling in their breasts the fire of pure devotion, may teach us the feelings we should cherish when hearing or reading the Holy Scriptures; when our hearts, if rightly affected, would burn within us, whilst holding high converse with The GOD of the Universe, through The Gracious MEDIATOR between GOD and Man; and having Revealed to us the otherwise hidden Things of His Law, and having Opened to us the Treasures of DIVINE Knowledge, and being Encouraged to Entertain the hope of Everlasting Life and Glory, Which are Therein Held out in Promise to the faithful and contrite Soul, through the Intercession of The SON of His Love. This Same JESUS, Who was Wounded unto Death, even the ignominious Death of the Cross, for our transgressions, was first Known, after His Resurrection, to these Disciples by the Distributing and Blessing the Bread set before Him: and what an Incentive should this prove in us to observe

that Injunction, which He Laid upon All, "*This do in Remembrance of Me! and so do as oft as ye shall eat it!*" Since not only after His Resurrection was it His First Act of Communion; but before His Death was it the Last Act, to Break and to Bless and to Urge it, in observance of His Own Unspeakably Precious Gift of Himself.

That Peter was One of the Disciples, by whom our SAVIOUR was first seen after He Rose from the grave, is confirmed by St. Paul, who, in adverting to the Gospel, Which he had taught amongst the Corinthians, said, *I delivered unto you, first of all, That Which I also received, how that CHRIST Died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, and that He was Buried, and that He Rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures, and that He was seen of Cephas, then of the Twelve: after that, He was seen of above five hundred Brethren at once; of whom the greater Part (the Apostle said,) remained unto that present time, but Some had then fallen asleep. After that, He was seen of James, then of All the Apostles; and last of All He was seen of Paul himself, as of One born out of due time.—* 1 Cor. xv, 3 to 8.

The Gracious Salutation of The PRINCE of Peace, with Which He Greeted the Apostles upon His Appearance amongst them, is an Earnest of that blessed temperament of Soul, which, by the Power of The HOLY SPIRIT, through His Benign Intercession, is diffused over us, when in SPIRIT He Appeareth unto us, and is received with thankfulness and adoration and devotedness into the inmost recesses of our hearts. For assuredly doth He say, "*Peace be unto you!*" when, in the fulness of faith, we open our hearts to receive and entertain Him; and the Peace He then Bringeth to us, is a Peace, Which the World can neither give nor take away, but Which Surpasseth the understanding and conception of the Unspiritualized. It Imparts a Heavenly Felicity on Earth, as far as our hearts can experience, or our thoughts conceive of That State; and is the Assurance that we may be of Those who are Sanctified unto the Election of GOD. The Appearance of our SAVIOUR to His Apostles, notwithstanding His Gracious Greeting and Benediction, Filled them, it seems, at first with consternation: and thus is it that Spiritual Truths and Realities are at first Unwelcome to the alienated heart of Man; the contemplation of Them excites an apprehension which savoureth not of Godly fear, manifesting an habitual disregard of the Omni-Presence and Omniscience of GOD, and His Intimate Acquaintance with all within, as well as without, with all the workings of our thoughts and designs, as well as with our outward actions: otherwise why should Those, who have Immortal Spirits within them, be appalled at a Spiritual Appearance, for the Creature is not greater than The CREATOR, nor He, that is Sent, greater than He That Sendeth. That CHRIST Took the Manhood into The GODHEAD is a Leading Article of the Christian faith, and a chief Corner Stone in the Fabric of our hope, that fallen Beings though we are from primeval purity, yet in Him may we rise to Brighter than primeval Excellence; and Offended as hath Justly been our MAKER with us, He will, through the Propitiatory Offering of The SON of His Love in Intercession for us, be again Graciously Reconciled to us. What will be our precise Condition in a Future State, it is not Given us here to know; but we may rest in hope, with the holy Job, that though worms will destroy our corporeal substance, yet in a Glorified State of Bodily Existence we may, at the Resurrection, see GOD. In which confidence we are additionally strengthened by the Apostle Paul, who, by analogy to the ordinary operations of the natural World in the generation of the most beautiful of plants from so small and unpromising an atom as a seed, by being corrupted in the earth, and regenerated by the united influence of sun and water, illustrates the effect of our Bodies mouldering in the grave, that they will rise in a State incalculably

more Glorified, being Regenerated by The SUN of Righteousness and Bedewed with the Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT. Utterly incomprehensible to our present understanding as is the Incorporation of the contracted form of Man into the Infinite Expansion of THE GODHEAD, yet should it not, therefore, be disbelieved by us, since the confinement of the Spirit of Man within his own Body is inexplicable to himself, and utterly beyond the instructive power of the lower Order of Beings to conceive. The Challenge of our SAVIOUR, in order to Dissipate His Disciples' incredulity, to feel not only that His Substance, as Man, Remained with Him, but the Very and Identical Body, Which He had Offered up in Sacrifice; and That Body, torn and lacerated as it was, without form or comeliness, and That Countenance marred more than the Sons of Men, did CHRIST Ascend with into Heaven. It is The SPIRIT, That Sanctifieth the Flesh; and whatever hath That, though destitute of beauty or symmetry of corporeal parts, is yet Acceptable unto GOD, and Invited to Communion with Him: it is the beauty of the Soul which truly adorns; and that is the only beauty which we shall acknowledge, when we see with purer and more penetrating eyes than those of Mortality.

Joy as well as fear will Paralyze the actions: it was rather the expression of belief, than the sense of it, that was here wanting. Jacob fainted, when assured of the preservation of Joseph. But a Greater Salvation was here, Such an One, as was indeed Calculated to inspire a joy unspeakable. The Compassion of CHRIST towards Human infirmity Forsook Him not, when He had Sanctified the Nature of Man by the Fulness of DIVINE Communion: HE was still Disposed, not only to Use Forbearance with His Disciples, though they did not outwardly acknowledge Him at first to be The LORD'S CHRIST, but to Help their unbelief by Rendering palpable to the organs of their senses the Identity of That Form, then Presented to them, as being The Same That was Crucified. To this Occurrence St. Peter alluded, when preaching to the conversion of the pious Cornelius and his Household, he said, *The Word, Which GOD Sent unto the Children of Israel, Preaching Peace by JESUS CHRIST, (He is LORD of All) That Word, I say, ye know, Which was published throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee after the Baptism, which John preached; how GOD Anointed JESUS of Nazareth with The HOLY GHOST and with Power; Who Went about Doing Good, and Healing All that were oppressed of the Devil; for GOD was with Him. And we are Witnesses of All Things, Which He Did, both in the Land of the Jews and in Jerusalem; Whom they slew and hanged on a tree: Him GOD Raised up the third day, and Shewed Him Openly; not to all the People, but unto Witnesses Chosen before of GOD, even to us, who did eat and drink with Him after He Rose from the Dead.*—Acts x, 36 to 41.

△ The Act of our SAVIOUR'S Eating part of a fish, even after His Resurrection, as well as His Attendance at the festival of the wedding in Cana, and the feast of the Publican, shew that Social intercourse is not only admissible, but beneficial and praiseworthy, when the Mind, That was in JESUS, Accompanies our presence and Directs our influence on such occasions. At the same time it cannot but be acknowledged that the Appointment of PROVIDENCE, in Making so many Subjects of Creation the Victims of Others, because One of them, who alone was Gifted with the power of free Agency, transgressed, is beyond the range of our perceptive powers. But though the use of animals, as fishes and birds and beasts, is thus Sanctioned, and, therefore, allowable, yet ought we to exercise this and every other controul over them in the spirit of forbearance and mercy; not wantonly to sacrifice nor wastefully devour them; since, otherwise, we not only increase the measure of destruction, but take from our Fellow-Mortals that portion, which a just sense of mutual Relationship to

The Universal BENEFACTOR should induce us to appropriate to Such as are in need.

To Peter and Cleopas CHRIST had Expounded the Passages in the Prophets and Psalms, as particularly Applicable to Himself. To these, His Disciples generally, He Points out the Fulfilment of the Prophecies, Reminding them, moreover, of His having Admonished them, previously to His Death, of the Same Great Spiritual Truths. But then, it seems, their understandings were not sufficiently opened to receive the Light of DIVINE Communication: so slow is the progress of faith in the Human heart, that, like Thomas, Few believe without seeing; and still Fewer, when they see, manifest the sincerity of their faith by adding to it the works of righteousness and holiness, in obedience to the Word of GOD, though bound, by the profession of that faith, to imitate the Example of CHRIST, and to observe and follow the inward Promptings and Guidance of The HOLY SPIRIT. In points of faith, indeed, the understanding may be opened, without the heart being rightly affected, and, consequently, without any profitable result being derived therefrom; as illustrated by St. Paul, who thus writes: *Though I have the Gift of Prophecy, and understand all Mysteries, and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.*—1 Cor. xiii, 2. For charity is the fruit of faith, and the one is as useless without the other, as the fig-tree or the vine, that, amidst any luxuriance of branches, bears no fruit. To us, whose understandings are opened to the full reception of JESUS as The CHRIST, The MESSIAH, The MEDIATOR of the Covenant of Grace, by Whom, according to the Revelation of His Gospel, Life and Immortality, in Peace and Joy and Fellowship with The HOLY GHOST, are Brought to Light, it belongs to cultivate the Tree of Faith, which CHRIST hath thus Graciously Planted in our hearts, that it may bear fruit an hundredfold for our Souls' nourishment here, and their Everlasting Consolation in CHRIST Hereafter: that we may add to our faith knowledge, and to our knowledge virtue; humbly and devoutly attributing our sufficiency, in all these qualities, to the Influence of the Merciful Dispensations of DIVINE Grace through His Mediation. That to the perfect knowledge of GOD, the Opening of the heart as well as of the understanding, is essential; and, indeed, that in a Scriptural sense they are synonymous, may be gathered from a comparison of this passage of St. Luke, and the relation, by the same Writer, of Lydia's conversion, which he thus narrates: *A certain Woman named Lydia, a Seller of purple, of the City of Thyatira, which worshipped GOD, heard us; whose heart The LORD Opened, that she attended unto the Things, Which were spoken of Paul:* [Acts xvi, 14, 15.] thus shewing also, that it is with the heart, through the Grace of GOD, that we rightly conceive; and, in Scriptural Language, an understanding heart is that, which worketh Righteousness, begetting, as in Lydia, a disposition not only to hear, but to obey, and, vitally, to apply the Word of Truth, from Whence alone Cometh Salvation.

The Gospel according to St. John, is still more full than St. Luke's, with reference to the Transactions which took place in the Interval between the Resurrection and the Ascension of our SAVIOUR, as follows: *Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut, where the Disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, Came JESUS and Stood in the midst, and Saith unto them, "Peace be unto you!" And when He had So Said, He Shewed unto them His Hands and His Side. Then were the Disciples glad, when they saw The LORD. But Thomas, One of the Twelve, called Didymus, was not with them, when JESUS Came. The other Disciples, therefore, said unto him, "We have seen The LORD!" But he said unto them, "Except I shall see in His Hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails,*



and thrust my hand into His Side, I will not believe." And after eight days, again His Disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then Came JESUS, the doors being shut, and Stood in the midst, and Said, "Peace be unto you!" Then Saith He to Thomas, "Reach hither thy finger and behold My Hands; and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into My Side; and be not faithless but believing!" And Thomas answered and said unto Him, "My LORD and my GOD!" JESUS Saith unto him, "Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed: Blessed are they, that have not seen, and yet have believed!" And Many Other Signs truly Did JESUS in the presence of His Disciples, which are not written in this Book: but These are written, that ye might believe that JESUS is The CHRIST, The SON of GOD; and that, believing, ye might have Life through His Name! After These Things, JESUS Shewed Himself again to the Disciples at the Sea of Tiberias; and on this wise Shewed He Himself. There were together Simon Peter and Thomas, called Didymus, and Nathaniel of Cana, in Galilee, and the Sons of Zebedee, and Two other of His Disciples. Simon Peter saith unto them, "I go a fishing!" They say unto him, "We also go with thee:" They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing: but when the morning was now Come, JESUS Stood on the Shore; but the Disciples knew not that It was JESUS. Then JESUS Saith unto them, "Children, have you any meat?" They answered Him, "No." And He Said unto them, "Cast the net on the right side of the ship; and ye shall find." They cast, therefore; and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes. Therefore that Disciple, whom JESUS Loved, saith unto Peter, "It is The LORD!" Now when Simon Peter heard that it was The LORD, he girt his Fisher's coat unto him, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the Sea; and the other Disciples came in a little ship, (for they were not far from Land, but as it were two hundred cubits,) dragging the net with fishes. As soon then as they were come to Land, they saw a fire of coals there and fish laid thereon and bread. JESUS Saith unto them, "Bring of the fish, which ye have now caught!" Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to Land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three; and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken. JESUS Saith unto them, "Come and dine!" And None of the Disciples durst ask Him, "Who art Thou?" knowing that it was The LORD. JESUS then Cometh and Taketh bread, and Giveth them, and fish likewise. This is now the third time that JESUS Shewed Himself to His Disciples, after that He was Risen from the Dead. So when They had dined, JESUS Saith to Simon Peter, "Simon, Son of Jonas, lovest thou Me more than these?" He saith unto Him, "Yea, LORD! Thou Knowest that I love Thee!" HE Saith unto him, "Feed My Lambs!" HE Saith to him again the second time, "Simon, Son of Jonas, lovest thou Me?" He saith unto Him, "Yea, LORD! Thou Knowest that I love Thee!" HE Saith unto him, "Feed My Sheep!" HE Saith unto him the third time, "Simon, Son of Jonas, lovest thou Me?" Peter was grieved because He Said unto him the third time, "Lovest thou Me?" And he said unto Him, "LORD, Thou Knowest All Things, Thou Knowest that I love Thee." JESUS Saith unto him, "Feed My Sheep! Verily, Verily, I Say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and Another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not." This Spake He, Signifying by what death he should glorify GOD. And when He had Spoken This, He Saith unto him, "Follow Me!" Then Peter, turning about, seeth the Disciple, whom JESUS Loved, following; which also leaned on His Breast at Supper, and said, "LORD! which is he, that betrayeth Thee?" Peter seeing him, saith to JESUS, "LORD! and what shall this Man do?" JESUS Saith unto him, "If I Will that he tarry, till I Come, what is that to thee? follow

*thou Me!" Then went This Saying abroad among the Brethren, that that Disciple should not die. Yet JESUS Said not unto him, "He shall not die!" but, "If I Will that he tarry till I Come, what is that to thee?"—John xx, 19, 20. 24 to 31; xxi, 1 to 23.*

We have here Several Additional Circumstances, All highly Interesting and Instructive: the infidelity of Thomas, CHRIST'S Full Knowledge of it; the Blessing Pronounced on Such as have faith, with less Light than flashed on the sight of this doubting Apostle; the renewal of the Miracle of the draught of fishes; St. Peter's instantaneous dedication of himself to do homage to CHRIST, as The LORD of Life and Death; our SAVIOUR'S Peculiar Commission Delivered unto him; the Prophecy of his death; and that of the extended life and fate of St. John.

It is here particularly described When CHRIST'S First Appearance to His Disciples Took place, namely, in the evening of that very day, on which His Resurrection Took place. And that He then Appeared A SPIRITUAL Body might be inferred from His Presenting Himself amongst them in a chamber, whither they had retired to secrete themselves from persecution, the doors whereof were closed, and continued so during the instant of CHRIST'S Admission. In the Spirit of Love, His First Object was to Still their inquietude and Hush their fears, by thus Greeting them, "*Peace be unto you!*" And with Such a Salutation is it that He is Ever Willing and Ready to Come in the Bond of Peace and of all Holy Fellowship by The HOLY SPIRIT unto All, who have faith in Him in the hour of difficulty and danger, amidst the threatenings of abused Power, the scoffings of impiety, and the rebel heart within us, striving to obtain the Mastery over us. And the Peace, Which thus He Offereth, is not the hollow truce of contending Ambition, but That Peace, Which is indeed the Peace of GOD, Surpassing understanding, and Which the World can neither give nor take away. Notwithstanding the Gracious Introduction of Himself to His Disciples, their doubts were not, in the instant, to be removed; for not till they had ocular demonstration of His Body being That of their Crucified LORD, did their joy arise at His Presence; for after He had Shewed them His Hands and His Sides, it is written, *Then were they glad.* St. Thomas's peculiar incredulity seems to have consisted in his declared resolution not to believe his eyes alone, unless they were confirmed in their testimony by his sense of feeling, by the touch and handling. The Re-Appearance of CHRIST, when this latter Disciple was present, was similar to the first Presentation of Himself: the doors were again shut, and the same Benevolent Greeting was Vouchsafed by our SAVIOUR: "*Peace be unto you!*" And immediately Addressing Himself to Thomas in Manifestation of His DIVINITY, as Alike Omniscient and Omnipresent, and Acquainted with the avowals of the Apostle, though made as he, doubtless, supposed, in the presence of Man only, He Adverted at once to that avowal of unbelief, Inviting him to the proof he had required; and Added Benignly the Admonition, "*Be not faithless, but believing!*" To this Incident, probably, St. John, in another place alluded, where he said, *That Which was from the Beginning, Which we have heard, Which we have seen with our eyes, Which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of Life, (for The Life was Manifested, and we have seen It, and bear witness, and shew unto you That Eternal Life, Which was with The FATHER, and was Manifested unto us,) That, Which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye also may have Fellowship with us: and truly our Fellowship is with The FATHER, and with His SON JESUS CHRIST.*—1 John i, 1 to 3.

To this Exposure of His Lacerated Body, for the conversion of One of His Creatures, The Merciful JESUS Added, in the Tenderness of Parental Solitude,

(as before observed,) the Admonition, "*Be not faithless, but believing!*" And to whom among us, is not the Same Testimony Afforded, in spirit at least, and the Same Counsel Administered? And unspeakably happy shall we be, if, with the Spirit that then animated St. Thomas, and in all the fervency of his piety and conviction, with all the fulness of his faith, with all his sorrow for the past distrust, and with all his gratitude for The DIVINE Revelation, so Condescendingly and unmeritedly Made to him, we, Each of us, in our hearts, own The Crucified JESUS as *our LORD and our GOD*, as The MESSIAH, through Whose Sacrificial Mediation alone we can justify a hope of Salvation and Advancement to Eternal Happiness.

St. Thomas saw The SON of GOD Incarnate Bodily; and, seeing, he believed; and the fruit of his faith was the entire dedication of his after life in love and gratitude to the Service of his SAVIOUR: and Blessed shall he be in the Life to Come; for his works and labours of love have followed him to the exemplary edification of every succeeding Generation. And we have That SON of GOD'S Assurance, that Blessed also are they, and Blessed Eternally will they be, who, though they have not seen The GOD Incarnate, have yet cherished the belief in sincerity and singleness of heart, that JESUS was and is He, and in the figure of the Apostle Paul's language, *walk by faith, not by sight.*—2 Cor. v, 7. To us may we consider This Heavenly Benediction as Directed, if we strive to realize, by our faith in CHRIST, (though not unto us has He Exhibited Himself in the Flesh,) the love that St. Thomas bore towards Him, and the earnestness with which he directed all the faculties of his Soul and Body to the diffusion of The Gospel and the Advancement of The REDEEMER'S KINGDOM over the hearts of Men. Then Blessed shall we be, that have not seen, and yet have believed; for the Voice of Truth Itself hath Declared it, and Which an Apostle of Truth hath confirmed, in his exhortation and encouragement to the observance of that faith, which operateth by *Sanctification of The SPIRIT unto obedience through the Blood and Sacrifice of JESUS CHRIST: by Whose Resurrection from the Dead we are Begotten, in the Abundant Mercy of GOD, The FATHER, unto a lively hope of an Inheritance Incorruptible and Undeified, and That fadeth not away, Reserved in Heaven for those, who are Kept by the Power of GOD through faith unto Salvation.* Wherein, if we be of the faith, we should greatly rejoice, though now we may be in heaviness through manifold temptations; that the trial of our faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, may be found unto praise and honour and glory, at the Appearing of JESUS CHRIST; Whom, not having seen, we love: in Whom, though now we see Him not, yet, believing in Him, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of the Promise of Glory, receiving the End of our faith, even the Salvation and Sanctification of our Souls [see 1 Peter i, 2 to 9]. But all which hopes and Promises and Joy and Honour and Glory will be Withheld from us, if, being Called, as we are, unto the True Faith, we are faithless and unbelieving, doing despite to The SPIRIT of Grace, neglecting the Salvation Thus Offered as in CHRIST JESUS, and rejecting All the Good Council of GOD.

On the Appearance of our SAVIOUR to the zealous and faithful Mary Magdalene, when offering in the earnestness of her reverential devotion, to clasp His Knees or embrace His Feet, He Said unto her, "*Touch Me not! For I am not yet Ascended to My FATHER!*" On His Appearance to St. Thomas, He Invited that Apostle not only to touch Him, but to *thrust his hands into his Crucified LORD'S wounded Side.* Such is the Mystery of DIVINE Condescension: for the confirmation of Mary's faith the Sight of JESUS, after His Resurrection, was Sufficient. St. Thomas though not less zealously attached

and devoted to JESUS, needed stronger confirmation ; suspecting, perhaps, that such an imposition might be practised on him, which the Enemies of CHRIST afterwards accused the Apostles of attempting to practise upon them ; and hence arises another argument in proof of JESUS being The Crucified MESSIAH, and of His Resurrection in the Flesh from the Dead : for had not such Evidence thereof been Afforded to St. Thomas, as left, or could leave no possible doubt on his, or any other mind, he might not have proved, as he afterwards indisputably did, faithful unto death. The Reason Assigned by our SAVIOUR for Mary's not touching Him was, that He had not Ascended to His HEAVENLY FATHER ; but, "*Go (Said He,) to My Brethren, and tell them I Ascend unto My FATHER and your FATHER, and to My GOD and your GOD !*" It is, therefore, to be inferred that He Ascended into Heaven in the Flesh, after His Interview with Mary Magdalene, but previously to His Appearance unto the Disciples ; though the Whole was Accomplished in one day ; for *with The LORD one day is as a thousand years : and a thousand years as one day. Time is not where Eternity is.* The Object of CHRIST'S Ascension was, probably, so to Obtain the Purification and Sanctification of His Flesh, as to be Empowered to Communicate, as The SON of Man, to His Disciples the Breath of The HOLY GHOST ; for This, according to St. John, He did ; and He had Declared that it was expedient for Him to Go from them, that The COMFORTER might Come to them. And hence doth The UNITY of THE GODHEAD and The TRINITY in UNITY Derive Further Strength as an Article of faith.

The Evangelist then, with reference to the Acts of our SAVIOUR subsequently to His Resurrection, states generally, that *Many Other Things JESUS Did* as Signs of His DIVINE Power Manifested before His Disciples, but of Which no particular Record was made. If, however, credit be not given to This Assertion, nor to Those, of Which a Record Remains, neither would Hearts, so indisposed for faith, have believed, had every Incident and every Utterance in our SAVIOUR'S Life and Conversation been Set before them. Whilst as to Those, who Cherish the faith in JESUS, as Revealed in The GOSPEL, the Further Numeration of Miracles, both before and after CHRIST'S Death and Resurrection, could have had no further effect than the Recorded Miracles have had in eliciting that faith and encouraging the same hope of a final Communion with Heavenly Holiness and Happiness, through The SAVIOUR'S Love, as believing that JESUS, The MEDIATOR, is The SON of GOD, and that so believing, *we may have Life through His Name.* Of Himself CHRIST had before Said, "*As Moses lifted up the Serpent in the Wilderness, even so must The SON of Man be Lifted up, that Whosoever believeth in Him, should not perish, but have Eternal Life : for GOD so Loved the World, that He Gave His Only Begotten SON, that Whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have Everlasting Life : For GOD Sent not His SON into the World to Condemn the World ; but that the World, through Him, might be Saved. He, that believeth on Him, is not Condemned ; but he, that believeth not, is Condemned already, because he hath not believed in the Name of The Only Begotten SON of GOD. And This is the Condemnation, that Light is Come into the World ; and Men loved darkness rather than Light, because their deeds were evil : for every One, that doeth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. But he, that doeth truth, cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in GOD.*"—John iii, 14 to 21. And again, our SAVIOUR Thus Declared : "*Verily, Verily, I Say unto you, He, that heareth My Word, and believeth on Him That Sent Me, hath Everlasting Life, and shall not come into Condemnation ; but is Passed from Death unto Life. Verily, Verily, I Say unto you, The Hour is Coming, and now is, when the Dead shall hear the*

*Voice of The SON of GOD; and they, that hear, shall live. For as The FATHER hath Life in Himself, so hath He Given to The SON to have Life in Himself; and hath Given Him Authority to Execute Judgment also, because He is The SON of Man. Marvel not at This! for the Hour is coming, in the which All, that are in the graves, shall hear His Voice, and shall come forth: they, that have done good, unto the Resurrection of Life; and they, that have done evil, unto the Resurrection of Condemnation."*—John v, 24 to 29.

△ Man fell by transgression from the Fulness of The HOLY GHOST, Which, till then, was in him, and Which alone could Qualify him for the Purity of Heavenly Communion. CHRIST, by the Sacrifice of Himself for Mankind, has Restored to Man the Means of obtaining That Indispensable Gift of The SPIRIT, Which Manifests Itself by the Graces of Humility, reverential love, obedience unto righteousness, and holiness of Life; and when These take possession of our hearts, through the perfectness of faith in CHRIST, They Impart to us the hope of Everlasting Peace and Rest and Fulness of Joy in The KINGDOM of GOD and of His CHRIST.

The Further Appearance of JESUS to a particular Number of His Disciples (recorded by St. John, who was himself present on the occasion,) Displayed again His Power over the Natural World; for at His Bidding the Fishes of the Sea surrendered up their lives for His Service, and coals kindled into fire to do Him homage. On His Approach to the Disciples, though as Man, younger than Some at least among them, He first Addresses them by the endearing invocation of a Parent, thus, "*Children! have ye any meat?*" HE Knew they had not; and that on His Will Depended their obtaining any from the source they had sought for some. But He had Descended from Heaven to Procure for them the Bread of Life Eternal to gratify their Spiritual wants; and He Ascended not into Heaven till He had Renewed to them the Manifestation of His Power by Giving them also, through Miraculous Procurement, bread to satisfy their natural wants. HE also Made this an Opportunity of Trying the pliancy of their disposition at least, if not of Testing their faith: for though at His Bidding they cast the net on the right side of the boat, yet it seems they knew not, at the moment, that it was JESUS Who Addressed them; and so far He Found them, (to speak metaphorically,) not faithless, but believing. The Miraculous Draught of Fishes, to which this is a Parallel occurrence, is Recorded by St. Luke v, 4, &c., and is observed upon in reference to Chapter iv, 18 to 20 of the Text in St. Matthew. The Disciples on this latter occasion had, in like manner, as on the former, toiled all night and taken nothing; nevertheless, at JESUS' Bidding, Whom they then regarded only as A Master or Teacher Sent from GOD, they let down their net; and the effect was equally mysterious on each occasion. At once St. John, the favourite Disciple of his LORD and MASTER, recognized the Presence and Interposition of his beloved LORD, Restored to Life and Power; and instantly exclaimed, with a mixture of holy delight and reverential awe, "*It is The LORD!*" Whether St. Peter swam ashore, or how he reached it, is not expressly related; but though he, probably, had not then that fulness of faith, which he had before found sufficient to enable him to tread the surface of the fathomless Sea, [see Chapter xiv, 28, 29,] and which his DIVINE MASTER had Assured him would empower him to remove mountains from their base, and transport them to the Sea, yet he manifested, by the act of casting himself into the water, a zeal and a devotedness to the Service and a love for the Person of JESUS, which became One whom JESUS had, by His Peculiar Intercession, Rescued from the grasp of Satan, and from the waves of interminable desolation. The distance of the ship from the Shore, the fact of its being a vessel capable of being worked much nearer to the Shore, and that of none other of the Disciples

following St. Peter's example, though all were his Juniors, and likely, from their occupation, to swim as well as he, raise, indeed, some grounds for imagining his faith rose to the occasion, and that he walked upon the Sea to the Shore, since the water was, probably, too deep at first for him to walk upon its bottom, and the distance, supposed about 400 feet, would be a considerable way for an old Man to swim, encumbered by his heavy Fisher's coat. But, be this as it may, to us it belongs to manifest, in Spirit, the zeal he displayed; as he went with eagerness to meet JESUS, we should set our hearts, every where and at all times, gladly but reverently and gratefully, to meet Him too, covering our nakedness with the garment of humility, and wearing on it the badge of unworthiness, but through His Interceding Merits; and suffering not the depths of whatever Sea of trouble we may be embarked upon, to keep us from instantly and heartily embracing the opportunity of piously communing with The SAVIOUR of Sinners. How the fire, and the fish, and the bread, which Peter found on the Shore, had come there, is not told us; but it is inferable, at least, that this arose from the Mandate of CHRIST, and was a further Manifestation of His DIVINITY, and the consequent Universality of His Power. The reverence paid by the Disciples to their LORD, in the silence they observed, and the spirit of inquisitiveness which they checked, is well deserving of imitation in all professing Christians, who, though not present with their SAVIOUR visibly in His Adopted Nature, should, at the bare mention of His Name, bow the head in reverence, and bend the knees of the heart in gratitude for His Love, Who not only Giveth us here All Things freely to enjoy, but Reserveth for us Hereafter That Sacramental Bread, Which shall be the Food of the Soul in all Eternity, even the Fulness of the Graces of The HOLY GHOST, and the knowledge of the Wisdom, the Greatness, and the Goodness of the Works and the Word of GOD. And we cannot sufficiently dwell upon the Blissfulness of that hope, and the Exceeding Precious Promises upon Which it may be Founded, through the Sacrifice and Peace Offering Made for us by CHRIST; and should thence learn to abstain, as well from the mention of His Name with the slightest feeling of indifference towards His Character and Nature and Office, as from that too frequent and familiar use of It, which savours of presumption and Self-confidence.

This Address of CHRIST to St. Peter [John xxi, 15 to 17.] is part of the ground-work of the claim of Papal supremacy set up by the Romanists; but the short answer to such claim in a work like this, which is not intended to be controversial, but aims, on the contrary, at reconciling differences and establishing one comprehensive and universal faith, is this, that the other Disciples themselves, and most markedly St. Paul, the Gentile Apostle, acknowledged no superiority in St. Peter: that they All equally received, as Apostles, from their acknowledged LORD, the Great and Confiding Commandment: "*Go ye and teach all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of The FATHER, and of The SON, and of The HOLY GHOST!*" and that they Each did so, in the fulness of Apostolic Mastership, without any subserviency to the dictates or will of St. Peter. And that even had it been otherwise, it does not necessarily follow that the Successors in the Government of the Church, particularly established by St. Peter, whether at Rome or elsewhere, should succeed to the fulness of the Spiritual Communication Made to him; since Many of the Apostles survived him, who had established Churches also, particularly St. John, the pre-eminently Beloved Disciple of his LORD, and who had Dealt out to him, long after St. Peter had ceased to preach, (by having undergone, as did St. Paul and Others, martyrdom,) the Dispensation of Prophecy. St. Peter's Appointment to feed the Lambs and Sheep of CHRIST was necessarily Personal, since it was the consequence of his professed attachment to CHRIST, and was to be the test of the sincerity of that

forward zeal, which made him foremost in rushing from the boat to greet JESUS; a zeal, which had before been manifested, when he handled the sword in his MASTER'S defence; but which zeal, in the hour of severe trial, had failed in its constancy. "*Peter! lovest thou Me?*" was first asked, before the Appointment was Given: and, Repeated as It was, might seem to amount to a Cautionary Admonition to Peter, not to pledge himself to the fulfilment of the Law of such professed love to his SAVIOUR, unless he felt it, and would consistently and perseveringly act up to it. And What our SAVIOUR Said to Peter, doubtless, He Said and Meant, in Effect, as an Injunction equally to the other Apostles. And it does not appear that Any of the Others sought or received a delegation of such Privilege or Power from St. Peter. Beside the establishment, nay, the very rise of Papacy is, comparatively, of modern growth, being long subsequent to the lapse of many centuries and Generations after the death of all the Apostles, and of their immediate Descendants or Successors. Without entering further into the consideration of this question, we will draw from the Passage the Instruction, which it seems calculated to convey to Christians in general. The question to St. Peter, first Put, was, "*Lovest thou Me more than these?*" meaning, probably, than those his Brethren and Companions, who were present at the meal: to them he was attached by long intimacy, by similarity of habits and pursuits, by a common interest, and to Some to them, possibly, by the strong cement of kindred blood. But CHRIST had Said, Unless a Man have less love for Father, Mother, Brother, and Kindred, than for Him and for The Covenant of DIVINE Mercy, Sealed by His Blood for the Saving of Souls, he had no Fellowship with CHRIST, and no Benefit from His Sacrifice. But This Declaration of our SAVIOUR, Who was Love Itself, and Who Came to Bring Peace and Good Will to Man, must be understood in a Sense Compatible with His Assertion, that, as the love of GOD was the First and Great Commandment, so That only Second to It, was the love of our Neighbours and Fellow-Creatures. To love GOD, and CHRIST in GOD, with the whole heart and the whole Soul, does not exclude the exercise of Kindred love in our intercourse with our Fellow-Mortals; and, indeed, the display of social charities, and kindred affection and attention is the surest testimony of the love of GOD reigning in our hearts by faith in CHRIST, unto obedience of His Word, and observance of His Example; Who thus Shewed, that love to Him would be best manifested by Peter in his care of, and devotedness to, the Called of GOD in CHRIST, meekly characterized as "*His Lambs*," who were Members of CHRIST'S Body, Himself being Typified and Proclaimed as "*The LAMB of GOD, That Taketh away the sin of the World*:" But He was also Prophetically pointed to as "*The Great SHEPHERD of Israel*," and was, by Himself, Declared to be "*The Good SHEPHERD, That Layeth down His Life for His Sheep*." His Admonition, therefore, to St. Peter, was in furtherance of that Figure of watchfulness and devotedness, Which He Himself so Signally and Perseveringly Exhibited. And Blessed be GOD, through CHRIST JESUS we, who now live, and have our Being at a distance of nearly two thousand years, may be and, indeed, doubtless, equally are Regarded as *Sheep of His Pasture*, and have, with the Like Care, the Same SPIRITUAL Food Offered Freely unto us, even the Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT, as The First Fruit of CHRIST'S Free Offering of Himself for us, Administered in His Gospel and by the faithful Stewards Thereof; a Food, Which alone can Satisfy the Soul, that, if rightly affected, must ever hunger after Righteousness, until the Perfecting thereof, and thirst after DIVINE Love, until experiencing Its Fulness, and Which, when once obtained, will Satisfy and Gratify us for all Eternity. CHRIST'S Repetition of His Injunction to St. Peter, Shewed What Continued to be the

Paramount Object of His Care and Providence after His Resurrection to Life, and His Costly Triumph over Sin and Death and Hell, namely, weak and feeble and helpless Mankind, whom He had Died to Save from the Punishment of guilt in an Everlasting Separation from the Love of GOD, and the Hallowing Influence of The HOLY SPIRIT, and whom He Rose to Justify before The FATHER and the Host of Heaven, as meet Partakers, through faith, by the Power and Strength and Riches of The SAVIOUR'S Interposed Merits, of The KINGDOM of HEAVEN. On the Question being a third time Put by JESUS, Whether Peter so loved Him, Peter is said to have been grieved at it, as implying a Distrust of the sincerity of his affection, and as, perhaps, indirectly referring to the former proof of his disaffection; but, immediately, in the fullest acknowledgment of CHRIST'S DIVINITY and the Essential Attribute Thereof, Omniscience, he answered, "*LORD, Thou Knowest All Things! Thou Knowest that I love Thee!*" And O that All, who profess the love of CHRIST, (Whose Love no Soul but has experienced,) and honour Him with their lips, would consider well and deeply and continually, how love to Him can best be manifested by labouring in the Vocation of bringing Children unto Him: ever bearing mind that He, Who Knoweth All Things and All Hearts, Knoweth Such as are His indeed; and Those, by whom He is lightly esteemed, unto whom That Awful Declaration of His will, Eventually, be Applicable: "*Not every One, that saith unto Me, 'LORD! LORD!' shall enter into The KINGDOM of HEAVEN; but he, that doeth the Will of My FATHER, Which is in HEAVEN.*"

In St. Paul's Address to the Elders of the Church of Ephesus, we have the Counsel of GOD further declared, virtually unto All who are Ministers of His Word, in Manifestation of The ALMIGHTY'S Care of Such, as are of The Flock of CHRIST: "*Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the Flock over the which The HOLY GHOST hath Made you Overseers, to feed the Church of GOD, which He hath Purchased with His Own Blood!*" For (adds the Apostle,) *I know this, that after my departure shall grievous Wolves enter among you, not sparing the Flock.*—Acts xx, 17. 27 to 29. Hence are we led to beware of the evil around us, as well as of that, which is within us: though all Earth and Hell combined, are not so powerful in their hostility to the best interests of our Immortal Souls, as are the perverse workings of our own hearts, through the lusts of the flesh, the pride of life, or the vanity of our Self-approbation, whereby we quench the Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT, Which would, on the fervency of faith and of prayer, Fulfil the Measure of CHRIST'S Love to us, by Giving us the Victory of His Cross, Making us Sharers of His Triumph, and Assuring us of the Joys of a Peaceful Eternity. We have here, also, the assurance of St. Paul, that not to Peter only, or his particular Successors in the Romish or any other Church, was the Office of feeding the Lambs and Sheep of CHRIST Confined, but that It Extended to the other Apostles, and to the Elders of other Churches, than St. Peter had established; and, indeed, to All, who, by the Testimony of The SPIRIT, had been Appointed to the exalted duties of the Guardianship and Overseeing of CHRIST'S widely extended Flock and Family. In exemplification that the Food, which was to be distributed to the true Believers or Initiated in CHRIST, was Spiritual, and not carnal, we have the testimony of the same Gentile Apostle Paul, who, in his Address to the Jewish Converts, (if, as is generally believed, he wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews, which, however, by whatever hand inscribed, was indisputably DIVINELY Inspired,) declares it to be *a good thing that the heart be established with Grace; not with meats, which have not profited them, that have been occupied therein.*—Heb. xiii, 9. St. Peter, in his general Epistle, [1 Peter ii, 25,] writes to his Correspondents, long



*the Brother of John, with the sword; and, because he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also; and when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four Quartermen of Soldiers to keep him, intending after Easter to bring him forth to the People. Peter, therefore, was kept in prison, bound with two chains.—Acts xii, 1 to 5. 6.* But though this History does not extend to a narrative of the Apostle's death, we have the testimony of the Fathers of the Church, that he suffered Martyrdom at Rome towards the latter end of Nero's reign; and, doubtless, his Spirit is now in the Courts of his LORD'S House, and Numbered with His Saints, and a Soldier in that Triumphant Army in Heaven, of Which CHRIST, as The MEDIATOR between GOD and Man, is The Great and Invincible CAPTAIN.

The SON of THE MOST HIGH, Who is The Same yesterday, to-day, and for Ever, Giveth unto us the like Assurance of Victory, and Peace, and Joy, and Immortality, on Condition that, whenever and wherever He Saith unto us, as He did to St. Peter, "*Follow Me!*" we, like St. Peter, do, in the spirit of a holy fear and a lively faith, follow Him, taking up our Cross, and giving our life to Him. That St. Peter understood CHRIST to have Foretold his death, we have the admission of Peter himself, who, after acknowledging himself to be a *Servant and an Apostle of JESUS CHRIST*, thus addresses his Correspondents, as having obtained like precious faith with him and his Brother Apostles, through the Righteousness of our GOD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST, exhorting them to shew forth their faith by their Lives, saying, *Grace and Peace be Multiplied unto you, through the knowledge of GOD and of JESUS, our LORD, according as His DIVINE Power hath Given unto us All Things, That Pertain unto Life and Godliness, through the knowledge of Him, That hath Called us to Glory and Virtue: Whereby are Given unto us Exceeding Great and Precious Promises, that by These ye might be Partakers of The DIVINE NATURE, having escaped the corruption that is in the World through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience Godliness, and to Godliness Brotherly kindness, and to Brotherly kindness charity! For, if These Things be in you and abound, They make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our LORD JESUS CHRIST. But he that lacketh These Things, is blind and cannot see afar off; and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, Brethren, give diligence to make your Calling and Election sure! for, if ye do These Things, ye shall never fall; for so an Entrance shall be Ministered unto you Abundantly into the Everlasting KINGDOM of our LORD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST! Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of These Things, though ye know them, and be established in the present Truth: yea, (adds the Apostle, in manifestation of that fervent charity that shone so brightly and perseveringly in his final career, through the faith and hope he had in CHRIST,) I think it meet, as long as I am in this Tabernacle, to stir you up, by putting you in remembrance: knowing that shortly I must put off this my Tabernacle, even as our LORD JESUS CHRIST hath Shewed me.—2 Peter i, 1 to 14.*

Thus undaunted did St. Peter continue his Christian course, thinking his work only done, when the power of working should be taken from him by death; and not only doing, but doing with all his ability whatsoever he found to do, until the night of persecution overwhelmed him, and closed, with his mortal eyes, his labours of love and charity. And to a Resurrection Joyful as his, may we, after death, awake, if, like him, we mortify the flesh, with the affections and lusts; dying, whilst we live, to this World's allurements and unhallowed pleasures, and fulfilling, both to ourselves and Others, the Law of CHRIST, to His Glory,

as Working in us both to will and to do of His Good Pleasure, and to our own participation in His Eternal Favour. For the day is past when it became necessary to seal with blood the testimony of our faith. To follow CHRIST, and to be with Him in His KINGDOM, we must, like St. Peter, bear the oppressions and persecutions of a World, which has sold itself to work evil: and no One can hope, if he determine to fight the fight of Faith, and to run the race that is set before him, to gain the victory and the prize without toil and labour and much of the painfulness of contention; but his success, however long delayed, is ultimately certain, if he continue in the faith of CHRIST as his CAPTAIN, and seek prayerfully the Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT for courage and consolation; for with the Admonition and Example thus set before us, if, indeed, we follow CHRIST, exhibiting the faith and constancy of true Believers on Him unto our Lives' end, we have the Assurance of Infallible Truth, that that End shall be Peace, and its Rest Glorious.

Peter had been Assured of the fate that awaited him; and this was all it was important for him, at this time, to know in reference to it; but impelled by a somewhat idle curiosity, so prevalent in Mankind, he must needs inquire of CHRIST what was the fate awaiting St. John; and the Answer Given by our SAVIOUR was Accompanied with a Reproof, Which may be a Lesson to us to keep our curiosity within Scriptural Bounds in Scriptural Matters. And though from the Terms of the Answer Itself: "*If I Will, that he tarry till I Come, what is that to thee?*" an idea was at first entertained that St. John, like Elijah, would rise at once to the Life Immortal in the Heavens, without being subjected to the common lot of death and the grave; yet St. John himself differently interpreted our SAVIOUR'S Words, and took pains to correct what he felt to be an error of judgment in this respect. CHRIST Willed that His peculiarly Beloved Disciple should await His Coming unto him in the Fulness of The SPIRIT, and Making unto him the Revelation of Vast and Weighty Events in the womb of Time, and even until and after Time shall have an end; as John himself thus relates: *I was in the Isle that is called Patmos, for the Word of GOD, and for the Testimony of JESUS CHRIST; I was in The SPIRIT on The LORD'S Day, and heard behind me a Great VOICE as of a Trumpet, Saying, "I Am ALPHA and OMEGA, The FIRST and The LAST!" and I turned to see The VOICE That Spoke with me: and being turned I saw Seven Golden Candlesticks; and in the midst of the Seven Candlesticks ONE Like unto The SON of Man, Clothed with a Garment down to the Foot, and Girt about the Paps with a Golden Girdle: His Head and His Hairs were White like wool, as White as snow; and His Eyes were as a flame of fire; and His Feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and His Voice as the sound of many Waters. And He had in His Right Hand Seven Stars, and out of His Mouth went a sharp two-edged Sword; and His Countenance was as the Sun shineth in his strength. And when I saw Him I fell at His Feet as dead. And He Laid His Right Hand upon me, Saying unto me, "Fear not! I Am The FIRST and The LAST: I Am HE, That Liveth, and was Dead: and, behold, I Am Alive for Evermore! Amen: and Have the Keys of Hell and of Death. Write the Things, Which thou hast seen, and the Things, Which are, and the Things, Which shall be Hereafter."*—Rev. i, 9 to 11. 12 to 19. Thus did Christ Come unto St. John, according to that Apostle's interpretation of the Prophecy; and that Apostle had, with Christian patience, awaited such Advent through a period of 60 years and upwards; for This Visitation seems not to have been Made to him until he was about 96 years of age; whereas the Prophecy had been Delivered when he was about 35. JESUS had, previously to His Death, (after Declaring to His Disciples that "*The SON of Man should Come in the Glory of His FATHER with His Angels, and then*

*He should Reward every One according to his works,"*) Said to them, "*Verily, There be Some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they See The SON of Man Coming in His KINGDOM.*"—Matt. xvi, 27, 28. And as CHRIST'S KINGDOM is not of this World, but is A Spiritual KINGDOM, the Glories of Which will be experienced by the Faithful, and Which, in anticipation, live in their hearts, even ere they are fully Called to enter It, That KINGDOM was virtually Visible to All, who had faith in CHRIST. And through the efficacy of that Faith, Enlivened and Animated by the Gift of The HOLY SPIRIT, Many see the Mighty Power and Greatness of The SON of Man Manifested in His Coming to their Souls before they taste of death. So All, on whom the Fulness of That Heavenly Illumination is Shed, see, like Balaam, in a Vision, and much nearer than he, The Fulness and the Glory of the Dominion, the Power and Majesty of CHRIST, as The SON of GOD and Man, and to Whom all Creation is Subjected. In proportion as we use the Imparted Gift of Grace, in the Spirit of Wisdom and in the zeal of holy gratitude, will be Developed unto us The KINGDOM of our LORD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST, and we may, in meekness and in joyfulness, faithfully anticipate, in Spirit, the Presence of the Final Judgment Appointing the Souls of Believers to an Inheritance in That KINGDOM, *When The SON of Man will Come in His Glory and all the Holy Angels with Him, Sitting upon the Throne of His Glory: and before Him will be gathered all Nations; and He will Separate them One from Another, as a Shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and He will Set the Sheep on His Right Hand; but the Goats on the Left.*—Matt. xxv, 31 to 33. And, Oh! may we so speak and think and act now, and through the remainder of our Lives, under the hallowed fear of GOD, and in devotedness to His Will and Service, that we may be Placed on the Right Hand of The KING of Kings, and hear That Blessed Sentence Pronounced unto us, "*Come, ye Blessed of My FATHER, inherit The KINGDOM Prepared for you from the Foundation of the World!*"—34. And let us not deceive ourselves by the vain hope of gaining Such an Inheritance, without the manifestation of a true and lively faith in the Gospel of JESUS CHRIST, and having our whole heart and Soul brought into a conformity with His Bright and Gracious Example and Benign Precepts. For when He doth Come to Judge the World in all its Generations, as Come He assuredly will, with the Host and all the Power of Heaven, *He will both Bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will Make manifest the counsels of all hearts.*—1 Cor. iv, 5. The Second Coming of CHRIST, and the Object of That Coming, being to Judge the World in Righteousness, are indispensably parts of a Christian's faith; and the Celebration of the Sacrament of the Eucharist, is, by St. Paul, declared to have the effect of *Shewing The LORD'S Death till He Come:* [1 Cor. xi, 26.] and CHRIST Himself, in His Revelation to St. John, Said, "*That, Which ye have already, hold fast till I Come!*" Prefacing It with the Declaration that "*All the Churches shall know that I Am HE, Which Searcheth the reins and hearts; and I will Give unto every One according to his works:*" [Rev. ii, 25, 23.] and again, "*Behold, I Come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no Man take thy Crown! Adding, Him, that overcometh, will I Make a Pillar in the Temple of My GOD; and he shall go no more out; and I will Write upon him the Name of My GOD, and the name of the City of My GOD, Which is New Jerusalem, Which Cometh down out of Heaven from My GOD; and I will Write upon him My New Name:*" [Rev. iii, 11, 12.] and again, "*Behold, I Come quickly, and My Reward is with Me, to Give every Man according as his work shall be: I Am ALPHA and OMEGA, The BEGINNING and The END, The FIRST and The LAST!*" And then the Apostle, in the application of This Doctrine, says, *Blessed are They, that*

*do His Commandments, that they may have right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in through the Gates into the City! Let him that heareth say, "Come!" Even So, Come, LORD JESUS!*—Rev. xxii, 12 to 14. 17. 20.

And JESUS Came, and Spake unto them, Saying, "All Power is Given unto Me in Heaven and in Earth: Go ye, therefore, and teach all Nations; Baptizing them in The Name of The FATHER, and of The SON, and of The HOLY GHOST: teaching them to observe All Things, Whatsoever I have Commanded you! And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the World. Amen."—18 to 20. △

JESUS, as GOD, was in Himself Essentially Omnipotent: but, as Man, it was of the Gift and Appointment of GOD, that in The United Natures He should also be Almighty: HE, therefore, is to be contemplated as our JUDGE, as well as our ADVOCATE and INTERCESSOR. And Blessed for Ever be GOD, and be His Name for Ever Magnified, Who hath thus Exalted our Nature unto Sanctification and Holiness, though in a Manner utterly incomprehensible and inexplicable by our finite faculties; and thus, by the only possible Means of Reconciling DIVINE Justice with Mercy, Cleansed our Nature from its pollutions, Washed away its iniquities, and Advanced us to a Capacity for Endless Communion with Holiness and, consequently, Happiness: So Offering to every One, who gratefully accepts and acknowledges Such MEDIATION, the Means of arriving, through Such Dispensation of DIVINE Grace, unto Heavenly Glory. For CHRIST, Who Died for the sins of Mankind and in Expiation of their offences, hath All Power Given unto Him in Earth, as also All Power Belonging to His HEAVENLY CHARACTER: and He will Bring All Such of the Children of Earth, as have faithfully trusted in Him and accepted His Covenant of Redemption, unto a Heavenly Inheritance, Associating them with the Glories That Surround Him, and Dispensing to them Joys the most Perfect, Surpassing all our present imaginings, and Which shall know no end. The Enrobement of CHRIST with DIVINE Power was Prophetically declared, for Daniel thus relates his evidence of it: *I saw in the night Visions, and, behold, ONE, Like The SON of Man, Came with the Clouds of Heaven, and Came to The ANCIENT of DAYS; and they brought Him near before Him: and there was Given Him Dominion and Glory and A KINGDOM, that All People, Nations, and Languages should serve Him: His DOMINION is An Everlasting DOMINION, Which shall not pass away; and His KINGDOM That, Which shall not be destroyed.*—Dan. vii, 13, 14. And David long anteriorly thus Prophetically proclaimed The MESSIAH'S Dignity: *THE LORD Said unto my LORD, "Sit Thou on My Right Hand, until I Make Thine Enemies Thy footstool."*—Ps. cx, 1. And the same Gifted Seer thus left us the Record of the Avowal by GOD Himself Made of His SON'S Supremacy, and this a thousand centuries before His Advent in the Flesh, as follows: "*THE LORD hath Said unto Me, 'THOU art My SON, This Day have I Begotten Thee! Ask of Me! and I shall Give Thee the Heathen for Thine Inheritance, and the uttermost Parts of the Earth for Thy Possession'*"—Ps. ii, 7, 8. The Universality of His Dominion CHRIST, before His Death, Proclaimed, Saying, "*All Things are Delivered unto Me of My FATHER: [Matt. xi, 27; Luke x, 22.] and again, 'The SON of Man shall Come in the Glory of His FATHER with His Angels.'*"—Chap. xvi, 27. Angels bore testimony to the Same Important Fact; for, on the Annunciation to the blessed Virgin Mary of her Conception of EMANUEL, the Angel Gabriel thus foretold His Dignity, saying, *HE shall be Great, and shall be Called The SON of THE HIGHEST; and The LORD GOD shall Give unto Him the Throne of His Father David; and He shall Reign over the*

*House of Jacob for Ever; and of His KINGDOM there shall be no end!*—Luke i, 26. 32, 33. To the Same Important Truth did John the Baptist thus bear testimony, saying, *THE FATHER Loveth The SON; and hath Given All Things into His Hand.*—John iii, 27. 35. Of which last mentioned testimony CHRIST Himself thus Spake: “*Ye sent unto John; and he bare witness unto the Truth. But I have Greater Witness than that of John; for the Works Which The FATHER hath Given Me to Finish, the Same Works, That I Do, Bear Witness of Me, that The FATHER hath Sent Me. Verily, Verily, I Say unto you, The SON can Do nothing of Himself, but What He Seeth The FATHER Do: for What Things soever He Doeth, These also Doeth The SON likewise; for The FATHER Loveth The SON, and Sheweth Him All Things, That Himself Doeth: and He will Shew Him Greater Works than These, that ye may marvel! For as The FATHER Raiseth up the Dead and Quickeneth them, even So The SON Quickeneth whom He Will. For The FATHER Judgeth no Man, but hath Committed All Judgment unto The SON; that All Men should honour The SON, even as they honour The FATHER: he, that honoureth not The SON, honoureth not The FATHER, Which hath Sent Him! Verily, Verily, I Say unto you, He, that heareth My Word, and believeth on Him, That Sent Me, hath Everlasting Life; and shall not come into Condemnation; but is Passed from Death unto Life. Verily, Verily, I Say unto you, The Hour is Coming and now is, when the Dead shall hear the Voice of The SON of GOD; and they that hear, shall live: for as The FATHER hath Life in Himself, So hath He Given to The SON to Have Life in Himself; and hath Given Him Authority to Execute Judgment also, because He is The SON of Man. Marvel not at This! for the Hour is Coming, in the Which All, that are in the graves, shall hear His Voice, and shall come forth; they, that have done good, unto the Resurrection of Life; and they, that have done evil, unto the Resurrection of Condemnation:” [John v, 33. 36. 19 to 29.] and again: *JESUS Lifted up His Eyes to Heaven, and Said, “FATHER, The Hour is Come! Glorify Thy SON! that Thy SON also may Glorify Thee: as Thou hast Given Him Power over all Flesh, that He should Give Eternal Life to as Many as Thou hast Given Him.”*—John xvii, 1, 2.*

△ St. Peter, in his Sermon to the Men of Judea and them that dwelt in Jerusalem, (the effect of which was so powerful as to convert Thousands to the faith,) thus avowed the Doctrine, *Let all the House of Israel know assuredly, that GOD hath Made That Same JESUS, Whom ye have Crucified, both LORD and CHRIST.*—Acts ii, 36. And St. Paul's testimony is: *To this End CHRIST both Died and Rose and Revived, that He might be LORD both of the Dead and Living:* [Rom. xiv, 9.] and again, where the Apostle invokes *The GOD of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, The FATHER of Glory, to Give unto the Ephesian Converts the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation in the Knowledge of Him; the eyes of their understanding being Enlightened, that they might know What is the Hope of His Calling, and What the Riches of the Glory of His Inheritance in the Saints; and What is the Exceeding Greatness of His Power toward them, who believe, according to the Working of His Mighty Power, Which (adds the Apostle,) He Wrought in CHRIST, when He Raised Him from the Dead, and Set Him at His Own Right Hand in The HEAVENLY Places, Far Above all Principality and Power and Might and Dominion, and every Name that is named, not only in this World, but also in That Which is to Come; and hath Put All Things under His Feet; and Gave Him to be The HEAD over All Things to the Church, Which is His BODY: The Fulness of Him, That Filleth All in All:* [Eph. i, 16 to 23.] and again, speaking of The REDEEMER and His Marvellous Love and Condescension, in Humbling Himself to our Nature and to its Destiny, Death, for our Restoration to Eternal Life, the Apostle thus describes Him: *WHO, Being in*

*the Form of GOD, Thought it not robbery to be Equal with GOD, but Made Himself of no Reputation, and Took upon Him the form of a Servant, and was Made in the likeness of Men: and, being found in fashion as a Man, He Humbled Himself, and Became Obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross. Wherefore (adds St. Paul,) GOD also hath Highly Exalted Him, and Given Him a Name, Which is Above every name, that at The Name of JESUS every knee should bow, of Things in Heaven and Things in Earth, and Things under the Earth; and that every tongue should confess that JESUS CHRIST is LORD, to the Glory of GOD, The FATHER.*—Phil. ii, 6 to 11. In the Address (attributed to the same Apostle,) in the Epistle to the Hebrew Brethren, thus are the boundless Power and Glory of CHRIST spoken of: *GOD, Who at Sundry Times and in Divers Manners Spake, in time past, unto the Fathers by the Prophets, hath, in these last days, Spoken unto us by His SON, Whom He hath Appointed HEIR of All Things; by Whom also He Made the Worlds: Who, being the Brightness of His Glory, and the Express Image of His PERSON, and Upholding All Things by the Word of His Power, when He had by Himself Purged our sins, Sat down on the Right Hand of THE MAJESTY on HIGH: being Made so much Better than the Angels, as He hath by Inheritance Obtained a more Excellent Name than they.*—Heb. i, 1 to 4. And after adducing a cloud of Witnesses from the Old Scriptures in support of the above Position, the Writer, in allusion to CHRIST'S Mediation, says, *It Became Him, for Whom are All Things, and by Whom are All Things, in Bringing many Sons unto Glory, to Make The CAPTAIN of their Salvation Perfect through Sufferings; for, in that He Himself hath Suffered, being Tempted, He is Able to Succour them, that are tempted.*—Heb. ii, 10. 18. St. Peter, also, speaking of JESUS CHRIST as by His Resurrection, Affording us the hope as well as the Means of Salvation, saith of Him, *Who is Gone into HEAVEN and is on the Right Hand of GOD: Angels and Authorities and Powers being Made subject unto Him.*—1 Peter iii, 22. And the Angel, who prophesied the eventual downfall of all the Enemies of CHRIST, saith, *The LAMB shall Overcome them; for HE is LORD of Lords and KING of Kings.*—Rev. xvii, 14.

Thus All Scripture, Which was Given by Inspiration, and was Written for our knowledge, Concurs in Proclaiming and Manifesting the Universal Authority of CHRIST. But to our great and endless Consolation shall we find, that the First Exercise of That Supreme Authority, on CHRIST'S Avowing His Omnipotence, was for the Benefit of Mankind, and a still Further Exertion than His Own Sacrifice (Eminently and Mysteriously Great as was That Sacrifice in the Cause of DIVINE Mercy to Man and towards his Soul's Salvation): for The Blessed JESUS, as the Consequence of His Announcing the Greatness of His Dominion, Commanded His Disciples to preach, universally, His Gospel of Pardon and Peace, Saying, "*Go ye, therefore, and teach all Nations, Baptizing them in The Name of The FATHER, and of The SON, and of The HOLY GHOST; teaching them to observe All Things, Whatsoever I have Commanded you.*" The Command to extend the Instruction and Gracious Tidings was not Limited either to Jew or Gentile, but was Universal as the Expanded Circle of the whole Human Race, and of every Generation during their continuance upon Earth. And in the Appointed Season of JEHOVAH, Such shall be the Influence and Effect of That Holy and Hallowing Doctrine being taught, that the desire of all Nations shall flow unto Him, Who is The DIVINE AUTHOR of It; and All Nations shall do Him honour. The Doctrine of A REDEEMER, however unpalatable to Human pride, is, to the humble and Heavenly-minded, (with whom alone is found That Wisdom, Which is from Above,) Full of Consolation and Holy Hope; and the Fact of This REDEEMER being The SON of GOD,

Veiled in the fleshly Tabernacle of our Nature, and Enduring, What He did, solely for our Soul's Eternal Good, is the Great Justification of That Hope, as Uniting and Reconciling the otherwise seemingly opposing Attributes of THE DEITY, Justice and Mercy. But CHRIST has Himself Held out to us the Faith we are to cherish in the worship, not of Himself solely, but of The FATHER and The HOLY SPIRIT Jointly and Inseparably with Him, as THE ONE TRUE GOD; thus Making it Essential to the Efficacy of a faith in His MESSIAHSHIP, to acknowledge and adore THE TRINITY as Composing THE UNITY of THE GODHEAD. Indispensable as This Article of Faith should therefore seem, it is yet, unhappily, the Subject of much question and dispute amongst many Members of all Nations, to which the Tidings of The Gospel have been delivered. But an unprejudiced investigation of the Holy Scriptures, with a mind divested of all Self-conceit, and humbly bent towards GOD in supplication for DIVINE Illumination, will, in the fitness of time, remove the doubt and confirm the Doctrine of THE TRINITY in UNITY of THE DIVINE NATURE. Every Book in the Old, as well as the New Testament, bears, directly or indirectly, testimony to This Important Truth; and in the firm belief of It both Fathers and Apostles of the Church lived and died.

But CHRIST Goes on to Shew that the Worship of GOD is not merely an utterance of His Name, and an acknowledgment of His NATURE, in The UNITY of THE TRINITY as our CREATOR, our REDEEMER, and our SANCTIFIER; and that to have the Benefit of a Baptism, Such as He Ordained, we must observe the Commandments Which He Injoined His Disciples; for thereby alone do we manifest That Faith, Which was also in CHRIST, Who was Himself The Great EXEMPLIFIER of Obedience unto all Holiness and Righteousness of Life, and Which He both Practised and Inculcated. And happy for us, as well as for His Disciples, unable as we are to do any thing as from ourselves Acceptably unto GOD, The SON of GOD hath Said, "*I am with you always, even unto the End of the World,*" to Supply every believing Soul with that Sufficiency of Good, both in faith and in practice, of which we All stand in need: The Same MESSENGER of Love and of Mercy Superadding the Comforting Assurance that He, through The Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT, will never Leave us nor Forsake us; but will be our LIGHT in darkness, our COUNSELLER in doubt, and our GUIDE through the mazy tract of Life unto the Goal of Salvation and Everlasting Rest; if we but trust in Him, and love Him, as we ought to do, with a perfect love, and observe His Commandments to do Them.

St Mark gives The Narrative of our SAVIOUR'S Injunction to His Disciples thus: "*Go ye into all the World, and preach The Gospel to every Creature! He, that believeth and is baptized, shall be Saved; but he, that believeth not, shall be condemned! And These Signs shall Follow them that believe: In My Name shall they cast out Devils: they shall speak with new tongues: they shall take up serpents: and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them: they shall lay hands on the Sick; and they shall recover.*"—Chap. xvi, 15 to 18.

CHRIST is here represented as Speaking of His Gospel, and of Baptism generally, as St. Mark well knew What That Gospel Declared, and in What That Baptism Consisted. But this Evangelist labours principally to impress the Doctrine of what should be the evidence of a true Faith, by the Miraculous Power Communicated as One of the Fruits of it; and the dreadful condition of those to whom The Gospel is preached, but preached in vain from their rejecting all belief Therein, or, though professing to believe, who afford no proof of the influence of Faith in their Lives and conversation. Although to the first or early Converts in the Dawn of Christianity, in its literal sense, was confined the Gift of working Miracles, as the effect of their faith, yet, if the same faith be in

us, we shall, through the supplicated Promptings and Guidance and Assistance of The HOLY SPIRIT, be Enabled to live the Life of Faith, and, by such exemplary exhibition thereof, amidst the meekness and lustre of the Christian Graces, may be Rendered accessory to the working of the most important and desirable of all Miracles, the converting in Others the heart of stone to the heart of flesh, and bringing home to The Fold of CHRIST the Wanderers of His Flock; thus aiding in the Glorious Work of Saving Souls alive, as the willing and persevering Dispensers of A SAVIOUR'S Gifts of Love. Thus, in effect, may we cast out Devils, by suppressing the evil propensities in Others, and giving birth to habits of order and decency and obedience to the Will of GOD. We may be empowered to speak or to write with the tongues or the force of an almost Angelic Nature, in setting forth and descanting on the Wondrous Works of GOD, and of The Especial Manifestations of DIVINE Love in the Incarnation and Sacrificial Intercession of The SON of GOD, in His Merciful Regard for the Souls of Mankind; ~~Superadding~~ thus, to the Gift of our original Creation, the Inestimable Boon of a Second Birth by His Redemption of us from Sin and Death, and Advancing us to a State of Sanctification by the Imparted Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT, to Prepare and Fit us for a Holy and Happy Immortality in Heaven. We shall, in the Name and for the love we bear to JESUS, and in obedience to His Commandments, visit the Sick and the Needy, whether Such in body or in Soul, or in both, and administer, according to our ability, and as the avowed Servants and Instruments of The Great PHYSICIAN of Souls, to their necessities, and may hail every successful effort of our labour as a proof of CHRIST'S Gracious Acceptance of our wish to manifest our love to Him; and, therefore, Crowning our labour with Success, and so Marking the vitality of our faith.

St. Luke's description in this respect is still more limited, for after recording, as before noticed, the Appearance of our SAVIOUR to His Disciples on His Resurrection, and His Saying unto them, in reference to His Crucifixion, *Thus it is Written, and Thus it Behoved CHRIST to Suffer and to Rise from the Dead the third day*, he gives, as the Conclusion of That Address, the following Admonitory Result: *That Repentance and Remission of sins should be preached in His Name among all Nations; beginning at Jerusalem:* (Adding,) *"And ye are Witnesses of These Things. And, behold, I Send the Promise of My FATHER upon you! But tarry ye in the City of Jerusalem, until ye be Endued with Power from On HIGH."*—Chap. xxiv, 46 to 49. △

As Remission of sin Came by the Atoning Sacrifice of CHRIST JESUS, it was necessary to preach That Doctrine in His Name, and as repentance in the Sinner is necessary to give efficacy to It, this was Properly Urged as the connected Doctrine: *Repent ye! For The KINGDOM of HEAVEN is at Hand!* was the first and prevailing Text of the Forerunner of CHRIST, John the Baptist; and it is, in effect, thus Recorded by St. Luke as the Last, as indeed it was the First [see Matt. iv, 17.] Delivered by CHRIST Himself. Indeed, the importance of repentance can never be too much insisted on; for without it, (as containing not only a consciousness of an inobservance of the Will of our CREATOR, and of omitting to return even gratitude for His Unceasing Goodness, but a sense of the danger we are in by incurring His Displeasure, and a desire to be Relieved from the afflictive burthen of our sins, both of omission and commission, whether of thought, word, or deed, and of being Restored to the Enlivening Experience of the Restoration to His Favour,) there can be no justifiable hope of a Remission of sin, even though the Sacrifice of CHRIST was Made for its Atonement; and hence no confident expectation of



an Inheritance in The KINGDOM of HEAVEN, though, by repentance, Made so Mercifully Accessible to us. But St. Luke's Object appears to have been to Record the Occurrences Which Established JESUS to be The MESSIAH; and his Record of the Acts of the Apostles (One of whose faithful Attendants and Fellow-Labourers he was.) shews the belief he entertained in The TRINITY in UNITY of THE GODHEAD: for though Remission of sins was to be preached in The Name of JESUS, as The CHRIST, yet was not He Alone to be The OBJECT of Worship; and, indeed, the Promise of The FATHER (to Which this Evangelist, in the sequel, records CHRIST to have Alluded,) that "*the Disciples should be Endued with Power from On HIGH*," is an Earnest of the Evangelist's expectation that a more Full Revelation in the Communication of SPIRITUAL Knowledge and Wisdom Awaited the Disciples; and the Fact of That Communication being Made, is proved by St. Luke himself, when, in his preface to his narrative of the Acts of the Apostles, he says, *The former Treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of All That JESUS Began both to Do and to Teach, until the Day in which He was Taken up, after that He, through The HOLY GHOST, had Given Commandments unto the Apostles, whom He had Chosen; to whom also He Shewed Himself Alive, after His Passion, by Many Infallible Proofs; being seen of them forty days, and Speaking of the Things Pertaining to The KINGDOM of GOD: and, being Assembled together with them, Commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the Promise of The FATHER, Which, Saith He, "ye have heard of Me. For John truly Baptized with water; but ye shall be Baptized with The HOLY GHOST not many days hence!" When they, therefore, were come together, they asked of Him, saying, "LORD, wilt Thou, at this time, Restore again the Kingdom to Israel?" And He Said unto them, "It is not for you to know the Times or the Seasons, Which The FATHER hath Put in His Own Power! But ye shall Receive Power, after that The HOLY GHOST is Come upon you; and ye shall be Witnesses unto Me, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost Part of the Earth."*—Acts i, 1 to 8. And the Diffusion of The HOLY GHOST in the Ministration of the Power of DIVINE Grace on the heart of Man, and in Fulfilment of Such Prophecy and Promise on the day of Pentecost, which succeeded, is recorded, by the same Inspired Writer, in the 2nd Chapter of the same Book, the Acts. Thus is it fairly inferrable that the Doctrine of THE TRINITY in UNITY and THE UNITY in TRINITY of THE GODHEAD, of FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST, was believed in and taught by St. Luke as well as the other Evangelists, and by CHRIST'S Disciples generally, and is Sacredly to be Received by all true Christians.

△ St. John, after relating the First Appearance and Address of our SAVIOUR to His Disciples upon His Resurrection, adds, *Then Said JESUS to them again. "Peace be unto you! As My FATHER hath Sent Me, even so Send I you." And, when He had Said This, He Breathed on them, and Saith unto them, "Receive ye The HOLY GHOST! Whosoever sins ye remit, they are Remitted unto them; and Whosoever sins ye retain, they are Retained."*—Chap. xx, 21 to 23. Thus also does St. John bear testimony to the Same Essential Point of Faith. And that The WORD, or Second PERSON in THE TRINITY, was, in that Apostle's understanding, JESUS The CHRIST, we have an express declaration to that Effect in the very opening of The Gospel by him, where he writes, *In the Beginning was The WORD, and The WORD was with GOD, and The WORD was GOD! The Same was in the Beginning with GOD! All Things were Made by Him; and without Him was not any Thing Made, That was Made: in Him was Life, and the Life was The Light of Men. And The WORD was*

*Made Flesh and Dwelt among us: and we beheld His Glory, The Glory as of The Only BEGOTTEN of The FATHER, Full of Grace and Truth!*—John i, 1 to 4. 14.

The Power Imparted by CHRIST, through The HOLY GHOST, of the Remission or Retention of sins, implies an insight into the very heart, so as to know whether faith abounded therein or not; and, accordingly, to visit with the Promise of DIVINE Adoption or the Assurance of DIVINE Rejection, as belief or unbelief prevailed. And in all cases the indispensable necessity of faith preceded by penitence, and succeeded by obedience, would be the leading Subjects of the Disciples' preaching. We, of this Nation, are now reaping the precious fruits of That Blessed Command of CHRIST to His Disciples, "*to go and teach All Nations, Baptizing them in the Name of The FATHER and of The SON and of The HOLY GHOST; teaching them to observe All Things whatsoever He had Commanded them.*" And in the language of the Evangelical Prophet should we *break forth into joy, and sing together*; since *The LORD hath so Comforted His People: and All the Ends of the Earth shall see the Salvation of our GOD*.—Isaiah lii, 9, 10. As we have partaken of This Inestimable Blessing through the Price Paid for It by The HOLY JESUS, so is it our duty in our several stations, individually and collectively, abroad and at home, to impart, as we have ability and opportunity, the Tidings Thereof, as The Offer of Covenanted Mercy in CHRIST, and The Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT to All, who have faith to be Saved: remembering the same Prophet's encouraging exclamation, *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him, that bringeth Good Tidings; that publisheth Peace; that bringeth Good Tidings of Good; that publisheth Salvation!*—Isa. lii, 7.

Faith cometh by hearing The Word of GOD; and, when it truly cometh, it bringeth with it repentance, of so deep and operative a quality, as to lead to a rejection of sinful habits, and a shame at having before slighted the Mercies and Goodness of GOD in CHRIST JESUS; and then arises in the Soul the Comforting Assurance of a Remission of past sins, and a Gift of DIVINE Grace to Guard against a continuance in sinful courses, or the making light of the Inestimable Treasure of CHRIST'S Redeeming Love. That newness of Life, in the observance of purity and piety of heart, and the manifestation of gratitude and zeal for What has been Done for the Soul by the United Energies of FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST, then displays itself in the character and conduct of the Believer; he is, to all intents and purposes, mentally, morally, and religiously a new Creature: old things, both as to habits and attachments, where contrary to his duty, whether to GOD, his Neighbour, or himself, have passed away. This was signally exemplified as the effect of St. Peter's first Sermon at Jerusalem, when *they, that heard him, were pricked in their hearts, and said unto Peter, and to the Rest of the Apostles, "Men and Brethren, what shall we do?" Then Peter said unto them, "Repent! and be Baptized every One of you in the Name of JESUS CHRIST, for the Remission of sins! and ye shall receive the Gift of The HOLY GHOST: (adding,) For the Promise is unto you and to your Children, and to All that are afar off, even as Many as The LORD, our GOD, shall Call."*—Acts ii, 37 to 39.

The Universal Spread of The Tidings or Gospel of Peace was foretold by David, under DIVINE Inspiration and the double-edge of Prophecy, where, in the xix Psalm, verse 4, he says, *Their Line is gone out through all the Earth, and their Words to the End of the World*: which Passage in the Old Testament is thus illustrated and commented upon in the New by St. Paul, who, when explaining and enforcing the necessity of faith in CHRIST, and submission unto the Righteous Law of GOD, (after insisting that *there is no difference*.

*between the Jew and the Greek, [or Gentile,] for that The Same LORD, over All, is Rich in Mercy and in Love unto All that call upon Him faithfully; for that Whosoever shall so call upon the Name of THE LORD shall be Saved,)* thus breaks out in the interrogative style of argument, saying, *How then shall they call on Him, in Whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him, of Whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a Preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be Sent? as it is Written, [Isa. lii, 7; Nahum i, 15,] "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of Peace, and bring glad Tidings of Good Things!" But they have not ALL obeyed the Gospel; for Esaias saith [Isa. liii, 1], "Who hath believed our Report?" So then (adds St. Paul.) Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of GOD. But I say, Have they not heard? Yes, verily, Their Sound went into all the Earth, and their Words unto the Ends of the World.—Rom. x, 4. 3. 12. 13. 14 to 18. And the Apostle declares, that with the heart Man believeth unto Righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto Salvation.—10.*

Hence, as a Conductor to the Beams of The SUN of RIGHTEOUSNESS, do we see what use we should make of our knowledge of The Word of GOD; to spread still Wider Its Influence, to infuse Its Spirit into the hearts of Others, and to bring them within the same Hope of the Calling of GOD in CHRIST JESUS; that they, repenting of their sins, and acknowledging their unrighteousness, may seek Remission and Forgiveness from Him, Who, though Knowing our sins in all their secret deformity as well as outward offensiveness, is yet both Willing and Able to Pardon them, and Cleanse us from all our unrighteousness, for the Sake and through the Pleading Advocacy of The Incarnate SON of GOD, Who, by the Imparted Graces of The HOLY SPIRIT, will Add unto Such as have true Faith and sound Scriptural Knowledge, the virtues of sober Self-government and of all Social Charities. For by the Grace of GOD, Which is thus Given by CHRIST'S Intercession, (and Which we are encouraged, by the same Apostle, to pray and hope for,) *shall we in every thing be Enriched by Him, in all Christian utterance and in all Spiritual Knowledge, so that we come behind in no DIVINE Gift; ever waiting The LORD'S Appointed Time for His Coming; unto the Fellowship of Whom we are Called by GOD The FATHER* [1 Cor. i, 4. 5. 7 to 9].

The manner of teaching The GOSPEL the most Acceptably to GOD, and, consequently, the most profitably to ourselves, at least, is exemplified by St. Paul's acknowledgment with respect to himself, as an Appointed Minister of It: for after alluding to the divisions that had crept into the Corinthian Church, and deprecating their continuance, he says, *CHRIST Sent me not to baptize but to preach The Gospel; not with wisdom of words, lest The Cross of CHRIST should be made of none Effect: for the Preaching of the Cross is to them, that perish, foolishness; but unto us, which are Saved, it is The Power of GOD. And I, Brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech, or of wisdom, declaring unto you the Testimony of GOD: for I determined not to know any thing among you, save JESUS CHRIST, and Him Crucified: and I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling; and my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of Man's wisdom, but in demonstration of The SPIRIT and of Power; that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of Men, but in the Power of GOD. Howbeit (adds he,) we speak wisdom among them, that are perfect; yet not the wisdom of this World, nor of the Princes of this World, that come to nought; but we speak the Wisdom of GOD in a Mystery, even the Hidden Wisdom, Which GOD Ordained before the World unto our Glory: Which None of the Princes of this World knew: for had they known It, they would not have crucified The LORD of Glory. But, as it is Written,*

[Isa. liv, 4,] "*Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of Man the Things, Which GOD hath Prepared for them that love Him: but GOD hath Revealed Them unto us by His SPIRIT; for The SPIRIT Searcheth all Things, yea, the Deep Things of GOD. For what Man Knoweth the things of a Man, save the Spirit of Man, which is in him? Even so The Things of GOD knoweth no Man; but The SPIRIT of GOD. Now we have received, not the Spirit of the World, but The SPIRIT, Which is of GOD; that we might know the Things, That are Freely Given to us of GOD: Which Things also we speak, not in the words, which Man's wisdom teacheth, but Which The HOLY GHOST Teacheth; comparing Spiritual Things with Spiritual. But the natural Man receiveth not the Things of The SPIRIT of GOD; for They are foolishness unto him; neither can he know Them, because They are Spiritually discerned. But he, that is Spiritual, judgeth all things: yet he himself is judged of no Man. For who hath known the Mind of The LORD, that he may instruct Him? But we have the Mind of CHRIST. And I, Brethren, could not speak unto you, as unto Spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto Babies in CHRIST. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat; for hitherto you were not able to bear it; neither yet now are ye able, for ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying and strife and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as Men? For while One saith, 'I am of Paul,' and Another, 'I am of Apollos,' are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul? and who is Apollos? but Ministers by whom ye believed, even as The LORD Gave to every Man? I have planted: Apollos watered; but GOD Gave the Increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing; neither he that watereth; but GOD, That Giveth the Increase. Now he, that planteth, and he, that watereth, are one: and every Man shall receive his own Reward, according to his own labour; for we are Labourers together with GOD: ye are GOD'S Husbandry; ye are GOD'S Building! According to the Grace of GOD, Which is Given unto me, as a wise Master Builder, I have laid the foundation; and Another buildeth thereon. But let every Man take heed, how he buildeth thereupon, for other Foundation can no Man lay, than That is Laid, Which is JESUS CHRIST.—1 Cor. i, 17, 18; ii, iii, 1 to 11. And to the same effect of inculcating sound Doctrine in Preachers or Appointed Ministers of The GOSPEL, and a hearty observance of It in Hearers, do the following passages in another of St. Paul's Epistles tend: We give thanks to GOD, The FATHER of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, praying always for you, since we heard of your faith in CHRIST JESUS, and of the love which ye have to all the Saints for the Hope, Which is Laid up for you in Heaven; Whereof ye heard before in the Word of the Truth of The Gospel, Which is Come unto you, as It is in all the World; and Bringeth forth Fruit, as It doth also in you, since the day ye heard of It, and knew the Grace of GOD in Truth. And you, that were sometime alienated, and Enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath CHRIST Reconciled, in the Body of His Flesh through Death, to Present you holy and unblameable and unreprouable in His Sight, if ye continue in the Faith, grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the Hope of The Gospel, Which ye have heard, and Which was preached to every Creature, which is under Heaven; Whereof I, Paul, am Made a Minister, according to the Dispensation of GOD, Which is Given to me for you, to Fulfil the Word of GOD; even the Mystery, Which hath been Hid from Ages and from Generations, but now is Made Manifest to His Saints: to whom GOD would Make Known What is the Riches of the Glory of This Mystery among the Gentiles; Which is CHRIST in you, the Hope of Glory: Whom we preach; warning every Man, and teaching every Man in all Wisdom, that we may present every Man perfect in CHRIST JESUS! Wherunto I also labour; striving according to His Working, Which Worketh in me Mightily. As*

*ye have, therefore, Received CHRIST JESUS, The LORD, (in Whom are Hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge,) so walk ye in Him; rooted and built up in Him, and stablished in the Faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving! Beware, lest any Man should beguile you with enticing words, or spoil you through Philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of Men, after the rudiments of the World, and not after CHRIST; for in Him Dwelleth All the Fulness of THE GODHEAD Bodily!—Col. i, 3 to 6. 21 to 23. 25 to 29; ii, 6. 3. 7. 8. 4. 9.*

The wisdom of teaching and the understanding heart are from GOD, and obtained by the prayers of ourselves and Others; and the only just subject of Man's glorying therein, is in admitting the Greatness of the Goodness of GOD in Such Dispensation of Power towards the establishment of our own right faith, and in the communicating so Exquisite a Benefit to our Fellow-Creatures. To have been Created Intellectual Beings and Immortal Spirits; to have had our existence Sustained by the Ceaseless Providence of our Unrequited CREATOR; to have the Free Offering of Pardon and Reconciliation, through the Mysterious Devotedness of CHRIST'S Mediatorial and Expiatory Sacrifice, and That Offering Crowned with the Sanctifying Inspiration of The HOLY GHOST, to Prepare and Fit the Soul for Heavenly Sanctity and Society; These are the Fundamental Doctrines on Which faithful preaching should proceed: This was the Apostolic Diffusion of Knowledge, in conformity with the Injunction of The SON of GOD; and This was both their aim and their end in baptizing in the Name of The FATHER and of The SON and of The HOLY GHOST.

△ The Nature of Baptism, on which some differences of opinion have arisen, though administered by the visible sign of water on Such as have faith to receive it, seems best understood as virtually a Communication from The HOLY SPIRIT, through CHRIST'S Sacrificial Intercession, of the Purifying and Sanctifying Power of DIVINE Grace on the heart, and acting on the principles and conduct, producing a conformity to Christian Perfection, where confession of sin and contrition for its commission have led the way to a conviction, that in CHRIST Alone can Remission be found. The water, as the element of bodily ablution and cleanliness, is an emblem or token of the Spiritually Purifying and Relieving from pollution the Soul, by the Grace of The HOLY GHOST through the Atonement of CHRIST. That water used in Baptism is merely figurative, and that the inward and vital Operation is the Influence of DIVINE Grace on a repentant and contrite and believing heart, we have the testimony of St. Peter, [1 Peter iii, 20, 21,] who, reasoning by analogy on the Salvation of Noah and his Family from the flood of the Deluge of Waters, says, *The like figure (water,) whereunto even Baptism doth now Save us; qualifying it thus: not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward GOD,* by and through JESUS CHRIST and His Resurrection, Which Confirmed Him as The REDEEMER and SAVIOUR of All, who flee to the Ark of His Refuge in confidence and thankful veneration: Which perfectly agrees in spirit with the doctrine laid down by St. Paul, as to the Jewish ceremony of initiation, which was the type of Baptism, where he says, *He is not a Jew, which is One outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is One inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of Men, but of GOD:* [Rom. ii, 28, 29.] and again, where the same Apostle says, *For in CHRIST JESUS neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new Creature.*—Gal. vi, 15. So also in his 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, vii, 19, where he repeats, that *circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing;* adding, what is equally the test of a perfect Baptism, *but the keeping of the*

*Commandments of GOD.* And in corroboration of the corresponding nature outwardly of the two Ceremonies as severally Established by the Law and the Gospel, and to shew that the Purification of the heart was the end and figurative meaning of each, St. Paul elsewhere writes, when still addressing Gentile Converts, who were before, practically, Strangers to each Sacrament, thus: *In CHRIST ye are Circumcised with the Circumcision Made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the Flesh, by the Circumcision of CHRIST; Buried with Him in Baptism; wherein also ye are Risen with Him, through the faith of the Operation of GOD, Who hath Raised Him from the Dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He Quickened, together with Him, having Forgiven you all trespasses: Blotting out the Hand-Writing of Ordinances, that was against us, which was contrary to us, and Took it out of the way; Nailing it to His Cross.*—Col. ii, 11 to 14. And still further by the same Apostle: *We ourselves were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one Another! But after that the Kindness and Love of GOD, our SAVIOUR, toward Man Appeared, not by works of righteousness, which we have done, but according to His Mercy, He Saved us by the washing of Regeneration and Renewing of The HOLY GHOST, Which He Shed on us Abundantly through JESUS CHRIST, our SAVIOUR; that, being Justified by His Grace, we should be Made Heirs according to the Hope of Eternal Life.*—Tit. iii, 3 to 7. Know ye not (observes the same Apostle, when reasoning on the inevitable and eternal death of Man through sin, but for the New Birth unto Righteousness Given him by the Grace of GOD, Which much more Aboundeth through the Love and Merits of JESUS CHRIST,) *that so Many of us, as were Baptized into JESUS CHRIST, were Baptized into His Death? Therefore we are Buried with Him by Baptism into Death, that like as CHRIST was Raised up from the Dead by the Glory of The FATHER, even so we also should walk in Newness of Life.*—Rom. vi, 3, 4. And, indeed, the whole of St. Paul's Writings abound with Passages illustrative of the same Doctrine. In the Epistle to the Hebrews the same view is taken, where the Writer, after censuring those, he addresses, for the slowness of their faith, in bringing forth fruits meet for repentance unto Salvation, proceeds thus: *When for the time ye ought to be Teachers, ye have need that One teach you again Which be the First Principles of the Oracles of GOD. Therefore, leaving the Principles of the Doctrine of CHRIST, let us go on unto Perfection; not laying again the foundation of Repentance from dead works, and of faith toward GOD, of the doctrine of Baptisms, and of laying on of hands and of Resurrection of the Dead, and of Eternal Judgment.*—Heb. v, 12; vi, 1, 2. The same Writer thus continuing his admonition, says, *Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water! Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering: for He is Faithful, That Promised; and let us consider One Another to provoke unto love and to good works!*—Heb. x, 22 to 24.

That Baptism was to be administered to Infants, as well as to Adults, we gather from the Commandment of our SAVIOUR, Who Said to His Disciples, on their rebuking the Women for bringing their Infants to Him, that he might Lay His Hand upon them and Bless them, *"Suffer little Children to come unto Me; and forbid them not; for of Such is The KINGDOM of HEAVEN!"* And when the Disciples were disputing among themselves as to Superiority Therein, JESUS Said unto them, *"If any Man desire to be first, the Same shall be last of All and Servant of All:"* and He Took a Child, and Set him in the midst of them; and when He had Taken him in His Arms, He Said unto them, *"Who-soever shall receive One of such Children in My Name, receiveth Me; and*

*Whosoever shall receive Me, receiveth not Me, but Him, That Sent Me.*"—Mark ix, 33 to 37; Luke ix, 46 to 48.

To give efficacy to Baptism, the fitness for the true reception whereof is in unfeigned repentance and in fervent faith in the Great Offering it represents, we must ourselves learn, and impress the doctrine on Others, to observe all Things whatsoever Which CHRIST hath Commanded to be done; that, being grounded in CHRIST, we may be Built up in Him; for if we keep not His Commandments, then is not the love of CHRIST in us; and if we love Him not unto the proof by obedience unto Holiness, then have we not been Spiritually Baptized into His Death; nor can we justify the hope of having any Part in His Resurrection to Glory from having Triumphed over Sin and Death and Hell, and Called Such as are His to the New Birth unto Righteousness. With St. Paul, therefore, leaving, or rather not confining ourselves to the first Principles, or resting on the theory and profession of Christian Principles, let us strive to apply Them and to advance towards Perfection in Their application, by a practical observance of The DIVINE Commandments, leading a life of holiness and righteousness agreeably to the Revealed Word of GOD, and, subserviently, to the Supplicated Guidance of The HOLY GHOST; trusting in the Mercies of The FATHER and in the Merits of The SON: casting all our care upon Him, Who Alone Careth for us, and can and will Administer Effectual Help in every time of need. For at the preaching of Peter *they, who were baptized*, were not only *pricked in their hearts*, but continued *stedfastly in the Apostle's doctrine and Fellowship*.—Acts ii, 37. 41. 42.

The necessity for works, or of a disposition for works when by the suddenness of death, (as in the case of the penitent Thief upon the cross,) or otherwise, the opportunity for doing them is withheld, CHRIST himself hath thus Expressly Declared; and those works, if done in singleness of heart, will not be without their Reward; but they must not be considered as forming the only or the chief ground of our claim to, or, rather, hope of a Possession so Inestimable and Interminable as an Inheritance in Heaven. Such a claim, or rather hope, can only justifiably rest, even with the most Faithful, upon the Works and Merits of CHRIST Offered on our behalf; to Which our own works, when in obedience to His Appointments, are only so far appendages, as giving efficacy to our profession of faith, affixing, as it were, a Seal to our Acceptance of the Covenant of Grace. Nor can we seriously contemplate the Nature and Extent of Those Intercessory Works on our behalf by The SON of GOD, and the Vastness of the Prize They are Meant to be the Means of our gaining, without feeling conscious of the comparative nothingness of our own utmost exertions to obtain the One or deserve the Other. For the Blessings attending even the Life that is, if wisely used, are amply equal to a full recompence for the most exemplary exercise of devotedness to GOD and of all the associated virtues of Christian Charity. And as every thing we have, even our Lives and their continuance, is of the Free Gift of GOD, we should consider both our disposition and power to do good to be the Gracious Dispensation of His Providence; and should, therefore, feel only the more disposed to spread His Praise and acknowledge His Goodness. And let it not be unto us an occasion of sin, by making it instrumental to the nourishment and increase of arrogance and pride; for these passions are utterly inconsistent with and subversive of the spirit of meekness and resignation that should predominate within us, and of the Spiritual Peace, that might otherwise be our portion, even in the Life that is; debarring us also, eventually, from that infinitely Greater Blessing, the Endless Love of The SAVIOUR-GOD in the Life to Come, when the Fulness of Wisdom and of Knowledge will Flow in upon the Accepted Souls, and Spread unceasing delight to every sentient faculty.

*"And, lo! I Am With you always, even unto the End of World!"* Such were the Encouraging Words Used by our SAVIOUR, when He Injoined His Disciples to go forward in the Principles, That He had Taught them, even unto Perfection, by reducing Those Principles to practice, and by preaching to Rich and to Poor, to Young and to Old, to Jew and to Gentile, the Glad Tidings of Salvation and of DIVINE Reconciliation by the Sufferings and Merits of CHRIST Interposed on Man's behalf. And in Fulfilment of This Promise of our SAVIOUR, He Continueth to this hour, and will Continue whilst the World lasts, and until Sin and Death are swallowed up in the Victory, Which He hath Obtained, to be by His Word and by the Operations of The HOLY SPIRIT within the hearts of All. who yield gratefully to Such Benign Influence, A PROTECTOR, A COUNSELLER, A COMFORTER, and An EVERLASTING FRIEND in all Things Relating to our Spiritual Welfare and our Eternal Interest. To Him, therefore, let us seek, in the spirit of meekness and thankfulness, that our end may be glorious; having the Fellowship of the Fulness of DIVINE Love Bestowed upon us, in communion with Saints and in company with Angels for ever and ever!

And with the comprehensive word "*Amen*;" a word which has relation to all the Matters that precede it, and embraces the whole Record by this Evangelist of CHRIST'S Gospel, doth St. Matthew terminate his Narrative; thereby meaning to give a further emphatic and solemn asseveration of the Truth of All he had related, on a full and careful review of the Whole of This Vitaly Important Subject. And on our hearing or reading It, it will be well for us, if with the same mind, which was in St. Matthew, we testify the readiness and confidence with which we subscribe or assent to the Truth of his Relation, and of the powerful and prevailing Influence which the Whole Matter, in All Its Parts, as Emanating from The Oracle of GOD, has had on our hearts, by saying also emphatically "*Amen*!"

Thus ends The Gospel Record by St. Matthew, who was himself a lively instance of that pure devotedness to the Will of GOD, which it would be well, in spirit at least, to follow as an example; for though by virtue of his office, as Collector of Customs, the insinuating attractions of comparative wealth and influence belonged to him, yet he, at the Bidding of JESUS, forsook all, and followed Him; being thenceforth immoveable from the faith, and always abounding in the Work of The LORD, knowing that his labour would not be in vain in The LORD. Of the fruits of that labour of his love in CHRIST JESUS, his once Crucified, but now Glorified, REDEEMER, here contemplated, may we gratefully partake to the strengthening and refreshing of our Souls in Time for Eternity. In this, as well as in every further consideration of Those Doctrines and Duties, Which he was thus so distinguishingly instrumental in recording, may that teachableness of heart be in us, which so conspicuously shone forth in him; and, like him, may we not only learn the Paths of Righteousness and true Holiness, but walk therein to our Lives' end here; that in the Life to Come we may, through the Efficacy of CHRIST'S Mediation, to our Souls' endless Consolation, walk in the Paths of Pleasantness and Peace, in Communion with the Angels of Light, and with the Spirits of Prophets and Apostles and of All the Just, Made Perfect by The HOLY SPIRIT of GOD for Ever and Ever!

To the Instructions Thus Given by CHRIST to His Disciples, St. Mark adds this Conclusion to his History of The Gospel: *So then, after The LORD had Spoken unto them, He was Received up into HEAVEN, and Sat on the Right Hand of GOD. And they went forth, and preached every where, The LORD Working with them, and Confirming the Word with Signs following. Amen!*—



Chap. xvi, 19, 20. Here we have an Evangelical Record of the Fact of CHRIST'S Ascension into Heaven, and of the Commencement of the Fulfilling The Prophecy in the ex Psalm: "*Sit Thou at My Right Hand, until I Make Thine Enemies Thy Footstool!*" And this Testimony by St. Mark to The Ascension, is corroborated by St. Luke, both in his Record of The Gospel and in his Narrative of the Acts of the Apostles, thus: *And JESUS Led His Disciples out as far as to Bethany; and He Lifted up His Hands, and Blessed them! And it came to pass, while He Blessed them, He was Parted from them, and Carried up into HEAVEN!* [Luke xxiv, 50, 51.] and again, *The former Treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of All, That JESUS Began both to Do and to Teach, until the Day, in Which He was Taken up, after that He, through The HOLY GHOST, had Given Commandments unto the Apostles, whom He had Chosen:* and, after mentioning particular Communications had between CHRIST and His Disciples, this Evangelist adds, *When He had Spoken These Things, while they beheld, He was Taken up, and a Cloud Received Him out of their sight. And while the Disciples looked stedfastly toward Heaven, as He Went up, behold, two Men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, "Ye Men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into HEAVEN? This Same JESUS, Which is Taken up from you into HEAVEN, shall So Come in Like Manner, as ye have seen Him Go into HEAVEN."*—Acts i, 1, 2. 9 to 11.

Thus was Human Nature, in The Incarnate SON of GOD, Triumphant over Sin and Death and Hell, Incorporated Everlastingly with the Pure SPIRIT of THE GODHEAD, and Made Next in Degree to That GODHEAD, being Superior to Angels, and All else of Creation, either Visible or Invisible. And with and through That Adoption and Glorification of our Nature by The SON of THE MOST HIGH, may we, by faith Therein, and patience of hope, and by conformity to The DIVINE Will, Revealed in the Precious Gospel of JESUS CHRIST, and as the supplicated Influence on our hearts of The HOLY GHOST, through CHRIST'S Intercession, trusting also in our HEAVENLY FATHER'S Mercies, Each of us, whether high or low, rich or poor, bond or free, eventually be in visible Communion, participating in the Exhaustless and Inestimable and Inconceivable Riches of DIVINE Favour; having Opened to us the Treasures of Heavenly Knowledge, the Sources of DIVINE Wisdom, and the Fountains of Pure and Endless Happiness.

The Continuing Presence of CHRIST in His Human Nature at the Right Hand of GOD, (a Phrase, doubtless, used figuratively, since GOD is A SPIRIT without Bodily Form,) the Martyr Stephen bore testimony to, in a moment when the Soul is least capable of deception; and when the frame of his mind, amidst excruciating agony of body, with Death instantly awaiting him, was so full of mercy, as to pray for the Pardon of his murderous Assailants; in his last moments, saying, *as he looked up stedfastly into Heaven, and saw The Glory of GOD and JESUS Standing on the Right Hand of GOD, "Behold, I see The HEAVENS Opened, and The SON of Man Standing on the Right Hand of GOD!"*—Acts vii, 54 to 56. And this, too, in the instant, when from the savageness of the manner of his Murderers in gnashing upon him with their teeth, he could not but have expected a stronger excitement of their hatred and malice and thirsting for his blood, at such an avowal of The DEIFIED Glory of his LORD and SAVIOUR, Whom they had also so recently persecuted unto death.

Though St. John does not, in his Record of The Gospel, expressly relate the Fact of CHRIST'S Ascension into Heaven after His Resurrection, yet does that Apostle bear indirect testimony to It; since in the Conversation that, in the interval, passed between our SAVIOUR and Mary Magdalene, on her approach—

ing Him with reverential joy and gratitude and affection, this Evangelist represents JESUS to have Said to her, "*Touch Me not! For I am not yet Ascended to My FATHER: but go to My Brethren, and say unto them, 'I Ascend unto My FATHER and your FATHER, and to My GOD and your GOD!'*" [John xx, 17.] thus affording us not only proof of CHRIST'S Declaration, That He would Ascend to HEAVEN, but Imparting the Comforting Hope that, if we believe on Him as The MESSIAH, and gratefully rest in His Meritorious Intercession for us, we may become the Adopted Children of GOD, and be Called to an Ascension unto our HEAVENLY FATHER'S Presence and Favour, being Admitted under the Glorious Appellation of the Brethren of JESUS CHRIST. And this Evangelist records Another Saying of our SAVIOUR, Bearing on the Point, thus: "*I Came forth from The FATHER; and am Come into the World! Again, I Leave the World; and Go to The FATHER.*" —John xvi, 28. And St. Paul expressly corroborates This Vital Tenet of the Christian Faith, where, in writing to the Converts at Ephesus, after declaring the interest he felt in the increase within their hearts of the Graces of The SPIRIT, in the knowledge of the Wisdom and Power of GOD, the Apostle describes That Influence of The SPIRIT as *Wrought in CHRIST by GOD, when He Raised Him from the Dead, and Sat Him at His Own Right Hand in The HEAVENLY PLACES, Far Above All Principality and Power and Might and Dominion, and every Name, that is named, not only in this World, but also in That, Which is to Come; Having Put All Things under His Feet, and Given Him to be The HEAD over All Things to The CHURCH, Which is His BODY; The Fulness of Him, That Filleth All in All.*—Ephc. i, 20 to 23. And in application of This Doctrinc, as Instrumental for the improvement of the heart, the same Apostle again adverts to It, when, addressing the Christian Converts at Colosse, he says, *If ye be Risen with CHRIST, (as All true Believers through the Regenerating Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT are,) seek Those Things, Which are Above; Where CHRIST Sitteth on the Right Hand of GOD! Set your affections on Things Above; not on things on the Earth! For ye are dead; and your Life is Hid with CHRIST in GOD. When CHRIST, Who is our Life, shall Appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in Glory.*—Col. iii, 1 to 4.

The same Important Fact of CHRIST'S HEAVENLY Ascension, and the Blessed Effects Thereof are thus incidentally insisted on and illustrated by reference to the Prophecy Thereof in St. Paul's argumentative admonition to keep the Unity of The SPIRIT in the Bond of Christian Peace, for (says he,) *There is one Body and one Spirit, even as ye are Called in one Hope of your Calling, ONE LORD, One Faith, One Baptism, ONE GOD and FATHER of All, Who is Above All and Through All and In you All! But unto every One of us is Given Grace according to the Measure of the Gift of CHRIST. Wherefore He Saith, [in Ps. lxxviii, 18,] When He Ascended up On HIGH, He Led Captivity captive, and Gave Gifts unto Men. Now that He Ascended, what is it, but that He also Descended first into the lower parts of the Earth? HE, That Descended, is The Same also That Ascended up Far Above All Heavens, that He might Fill All Things.*—Eph. iv, 3 to 10. And in another place saith the Inspired Writer to the Hebrews, *GOD, Who at Sundry Times and in Divers Manners Spake, in time past, unto the Fathers by the Prophets, hath, in these last days, Spoken unto us by His SON, Whom He hath Appointed HEIR of All Things; by Whom also He Made the Worlds; Who, being The Brightness of His Glory and the Express Image of His PERSON, and Upholding All Things by the Word of His Power, when He had by Himself Purged our sins, Sat down on the Right Hand of The MAJESTY on HIGH; being Made So Much Better than the Angels, as He hath by Inheritance Obtained a more Excellent Name than*

they.—Heb. i, 1 to 4. St. Paul also, in his Communication to Timothy, adverts to the Doctrine, saying, *Without controversy, great is the Mystery of Godliness; GOD was Manifest in the Flesh, Justified in The SPIRIT, Seen of Angels, Preached unto the Gentiles, Believed on in the World, Received up into Glory.*—1 Tim. iii. 16. And in the Epistle to the Hebrews another Passage applicable to the Position is: *We have A Great HIGH PRIEST, That is Passed into the Heavens, JESUS, The SON of GOD.*—Chap. iv, 14. On which Account the Writer of that Epistle exhorts his converted Countrymen to *hold fast their profession; for* (adds he,) *Such An HIGH PRIEST Became us, Who is Holy, Harmless, Undeiled, Separate from Sinners, and Made Higher than the Heavens:* [Chap. vii, 26.] and in the summary of his Address the Writer thus further affirms the same Essential Doctrine: *Now of the Things, Which we have spoken. This is the Sum:* [viii, 1.] and after again denominating JESUS as our Great HIGH PRIEST, he adds, *For CHRIST is not Entered into the Holy Places made with hands, which are the figures of the True; but into HEAVEN itself, now to Appear in the Presence of GOD for us:* [Heb. ix, 24.] and again, *This Man, CHRIST JESUS, after He had Offered One Sacrifice for sins for Ever, Sat down on the Right Hand of GOD; from henceforth Expecting till His Enemies be Made His Footstool:* [Chap. x, 12, 13.] and in further application of the Same Subject, the Writer introduces what we should do well to add in practice to our knowledge: *Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a Cloud of Witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin, which doth so easily beset us; and let us run with patience the Race, that is Set before us; looking unto JESUS, The AUTHOR and FINISHER of our Faith: Who, for the Joy, That was Set before Him, Endured the Cross, Despising the Shame, and is Set down at the Right Hand of The Throne of GOD:* [Heb. xii, 1, 2.] and in still further illustration of the Cloud of Witnesses we may add from St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, where he is enlarging on the Doctrine of the Justification of Man through CHRIST JESUS, when he says, *Who is he, that condemneth? It is CHRIST, That Died, yea, rather, That is Risen again; Who is even at the Right Hand of GOD; Who also Maketh Intercession for us.*—Rom. viii, 34. To this Effect is the evidence given by St. Peter, when, reasoning from the Old Testament on The DIVINITY of JESUS, and that He was The SON of GOD and The Expected MESSIAH, in the course of his argument the Apostle says, *This JESUS hath GOD Raised up, Whereof we All are Witnesses. Therefore, being by the Right Hand of GOD Exalted, and having Received of The FATHER the Promise of The HOLY GHOST, He hath Shed forth This,* (the Power Imparted to the Apostles of speaking with divers languages as The SPIRIT Gave them utterance;) *for* (adds the Apostle,) *David is not Ascended into the Heavens; but he saith himself,* [Ps. cx. 1,] *“THE LORD Said unto my LORD, ‘Sit Thou on My Right Hand, until I Make Thy Foes Thy Footstool.’ Therefore let all the House of Israel know assuredly, that GOD hath Made That Same JESUS, Whom ye have Crucified, both LORD and CHRIST.*—Acts ii, 32 to 36. 4. And in one of his Epistles the same Apostle saith, *CHRIST hath once Suffered for (our) sins, The JUST for the Unjust, that He might Bring us to GOD; being Put to Death in the Flesh, but Quickened by The SPIRIT; Who is Gone into HEAVEN, and is on the Right Hand of GOD: Angels and Authorities and Powers being Made subject unto Him.*—1 Peter iii, 18. 22.

△ In the opening of his Apocalyptic Communication, the venerable Disciple, St. John, thus enriches the scroll of Gospel Testimony: *John to the Seven Churches, which are in Asia, Grace be unto you, and Peace from Him, Which is, and Which was, and Which is to Come; and from the Seven Spirits, which are before His Throne; and from JESUS CHRIST, Who is The Faithful WIT-*

*NESS, and The FIRST BEGOTTEN of the Dead, and The PRINCE of the Kings of the Earth! Unto Him, That Loved us, and Washed us from our sins in His Own Blood, and hath Made us Kings and Priests unto GOD and His FATHER; to Him be Glory and Dominion for Ever and Ever! Amen.* And then with a Prophetic eye, penetrating the Deep Things of GOD, Awaiting Their Fulfilment until the Day of Universal Judgment upon Mankind, the Apostle breaks out thus apostrophetically, saying, *Behold, He Cometh with Clouds: and every eye shall see Him, and they also, which pierced Him; and all Kindreds of the Earth shall wail because of Him!* [Rev. i, 4 to 7.] that is, shall shed interminably tears of sorrow, or of joy, at His Advent, as He shall Look upon Each with the Countenance of Rejection or Adoption.

The second additional fact recorded by St. Mark of the influence of Faith on the hearts of the Apostles, is so obvious from the whole tenor of their History and Writings, as contained in the Acts and Epistles, that to do them justice the whole of those Records should be consulted, and a careful application of them, at the same time, made to ourselves and our own habits of thought and action, of Life and conversation: Since They were Written under DIVINE Inspiration equally for our Instruction and Admonition. And when we know These Things, (and so manifest are They for such Great and Gracious and Eternal Purposes, that he who runs may read Them;) happy, and only so, shall we be, if we act upon Them. And, on the contrary, wretched and miserable, and so everlastingly shall we be, if, as we have means and opportunity, and according to our ability in our several circumstances and situations, we regard Them not.

St. Luke, in conclusion of his Gospel Record, after a like description of CHRIST'S Benediction to His Disciples, and His Ascension in their Presence, adds, *And they worshipped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and were continually in the Temple, praising and blessing GOD. Amen!*—Chap. xxiv, 52, 53.

Such is the effect of Faith; such the fruit of Holiness. There is a Joy unspeakable and Full of Glory, a Peace, that passeth the unspiritualized Man's understanding, a Hope, that almost realizes the Happiness of HEAVEN, which belong to them who, from their hearts, believe in the Necessity and Sufficiency of CHRIST'S Mediation, and who, in submissiveness to The DIVINE Will, and in subjection to CHRIST'S Authority, go the Way That He hath Appointed for them; neither Principalities nor Powers, neither derision nor scorn, neither evil report nor malicious persecution, neither pains nor bonds, nor even Death itself inducing them to turn away either to the right or to the left from such faith and obedience unto Holiness.

St. John terminates his Record of The Gospel by this solemn verification of It, and with an assertion of the unnumbered and numberless Works and Manifestations of the Wisdom and Goodness of the Soul-Loving JESUS, saying, *There are also Many Other Things, Which JESUS Did, the Which, if They should be written every One, I suppose that even the World itself could not contain the Books, that should be written. Amen!*—John xxi, 25. Thus difficult does it seem to the Evangelist's mind to select, from So Rich and Exhaustless a Mine, the Treasures Which should do the fullest Justice to The DIVINE Mission of The SON of GOD. But happily, Enough is thus Furnished, under The HOLY SPIRIT'S Guidance, to convict the heart of sin; to stir up the spirit of repentance; to awaken a sense of hopelessness of DIVINE Favour, but through The Great and Gracious Peace Offering Made in the Mystery of the Condescending Mercy and Love of The SON of THE MOST HIGH. And justly is The Gospel Interpreted as The Blessed Tidings of Reconciliation and

Everlasting Peace unto All, who, with meek hearts and firm faith, so receive and apply It. Let us, therefore, hold fast the faith, as There Proposed, in the Unity of The SPIRIT and in the Bond of Peace; adding to that faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience Godliness, and to Godliness Brotherly kindness, and to Brotherly kindness charity; that, believing in the Mercies of The FATHER, our CREATOR, and trusting in the Merits of The SON, our REDEEMER, and yielding to the Guidance of The HOLY SPIRIT, our SANCTIFIER, we may have the Assurance of Eternal Salvation and Sanctification. Thus will not CHRIST have Suffered for us in vain; but we shall be Restored to the Likeness of His NATURE, and may cherish the hope of sharing the Riches of the Fulness of His Favour in Time and in Eternity. Amen! So be it in Thy Mercy, and in Thy SON'S Love, O LORD GOD ALMIGHTY!

THE END.

# INDEX

TO THE

## SCRIPTURAL HISTORIES OF ABRAHAM AND DAVID.

| CONTENTS OF THE HISTORY OF ABRAHAM.—                                                                                                                             |  | Page.  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--------|
| Introductory Remarks on the Connection of Abraham and David, both Prophetically and Genealogically, with JESUS CHRIST, The MESSIAH                               |  | 5, 6   |
| Abraham's birth and marriage                                                                                                                                     |  | 6      |
| Removal from Ur to Canaan                                                                                                                                        |  | "      |
| The ALMIGHTY'S Communing with Abraham, and His Signal Benediction                                                                                                |  | "      |
| Abraham's prompt obedience to The DIVINE Command, and removal with his Nephew Lot                                                                                |  | 7      |
| His piety and mode of worship                                                                                                                                    |  | "      |
| Address in adjusting a strife between Lot's and his Servants                                                                                                     |  | "      |
| His military courage and skill in the rescue of Lot from captivity, and forbearance in declining a share in the spoil taken from the Enemy                       |  | "      |
| Dedication of a Tenth of the Spoil to the Minister of GOD                                                                                                        |  | "      |
| Melchizedeck's invocation of The DIVINE Blessing on Abraham                                                                                                      |  | 8      |
| Notice of this incident by the Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews                                                                                              |  | "      |
| Intercession with GOD for a lineal Heir, lest the Steward should succeed to his effects                                                                          |  | "      |
| GOD'S Encouraging Answer                                                                                                                                         |  | "      |
| Abraham's belief in The DIVINE Promise, and The ALMIGHTY'S Estimate thereof                                                                                      |  | "      |
| St. Paul's reflections Thereon                                                                                                                                   |  | "      |
| Abraham's mode of relieving his Wife Sarah from the offensive manner of Hagar, her Bond-Woman, towards her                                                       |  | "      |
| His prayer for Ishmael, his Son by Hagar                                                                                                                         |  | "      |
| The Renewed Promise to and Covenant with Abraham, and the Appointed Change in his and his Wife's names                                                           |  | 9      |
| Circumcision instituted                                                                                                                                          |  | "      |
| Abraham entertains The SON of GOD and attendant Angels                                                                                                           |  | "      |
| DIVINE Testimony to Abraham's Family and Household arrangements                                                                                                  |  | 10     |
| Supplication to have the Impending Judgment upon Sodom and Gomorrah Averted                                                                                      |  | 10, 11 |
| Faith in GOD'S Omniscience, and submission to His Justice                                                                                                        |  | 11     |
| Abraham's disingenuousness with Abimelech, in calling Sarah his Sister                                                                                           |  | 12     |
| Efficacy of Abraham's prayer on Abimelech's behalf                                                                                                               |  | "      |
| Birth of Isaac; his Circumcision                                                                                                                                 |  | "      |
| Hagar's mockery of Sarah on becoming a Mother; Sarah's resentment; effect on Abraham; GOD'S Sanction of Hagar's and Ishmael's dismissal by Abraham               |  | "      |
| Abraham's treaty of peace with Abimelech                                                                                                                         |  | 13     |
| Abraham's remonstrance on the violence shewn by Abimelech's Servants                                                                                             |  | "      |
| Accommodation between them                                                                                                                                       |  | "      |
| The great Trial of Abraham's faith and obedience unto Holiness, when Called upon to sacrifice his Son Isaac                                                      |  | 14     |
| The progress towards the Appointed Place of Offering                                                                                                             |  | 15     |
| Recall of The DIVINE Injunction                                                                                                                                  |  | 17     |
| Substitution of a ram for an offering                                                                                                                            |  | "      |
| DIVINE Estimate of such obedience, and Promise of endless Generations to Abraham, and the Crowning Glory of being the Stock from Which The MESSIAH should Spring |  | "      |
| Death and burial of Sarah                                                                                                                                        |  | "      |
| Abraham's treaty for a Family Sepulchre                                                                                                                          |  | 18     |

|                                                                                                                                            |          |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| His anxiety and arrangement to secure a suitable Wife for his Son Isaac                                                                    | 19       |
| Embassy sent to his Native Land for that object                                                                                            | 20       |
| The Negotiation and securing of Rebekah, of Abraham's Kindred, by a Peculiar Providence for Isaac                                          | 21, 22   |
| Isaac's reception of her; their marriage; and his love for her                                                                             | 22       |
| Reflections on the Steward's piety, and devotedness to Abraham's and Isaac's interest                                                      | 23       |
| Abraham's subsequent marriage                                                                                                              | "        |
| His preference for Isaac in the disposal of his property                                                                                   | "        |
| His mode of providing for his other Children                                                                                               | "        |
| Abraham's death and burial                                                                                                                 | 24       |
| Testimony of Prophets in the Old Testament to the distinguished character of Abraham                                                       | "        |
| True and lively faith in CHRIST constitutes a Title to be of the Spiritual Seed of Abraham                                                 | 25       |
| The New Testament views and estimate of Abraham's character                                                                                | 25 to 29 |
| CONTENTS OF DAVID'S HISTORY.—                                                                                                              |          |
| Its prominent connection with That of The MESSIAH                                                                                          | 30       |
| DIVINE Appointment of him to be King on Saul's disaffection to GOD'S Command                                                               | "        |
| The Prophet Samuel's anointing him as the Chosen amongst Jesse's numerous Sons, though the Youngest                                        | "        |
| GOD'S Previous Annunciation of His Preference for David                                                                                    | 31       |
| St. Paul's confirmation of Such Preference, and of David's being the Line of The SAVIOUR'S Descent                                         | "        |
| Just Discrimination of GOD in Such Selection                                                                                               | 31, 32   |
| Reflections thereon                                                                                                                        | 32       |
| The Communication of DIVINE Grace to David: Its Consistency with Free Agency                                                               | "        |
| Saul's mental malady consequent on GOD'S Rejection of him                                                                                  | "        |
| David called on to calm its disturbance by the influence of music                                                                          | "        |
| Character given of David by a Servant of Saul                                                                                              | "        |
| David appointed Armour-Bearer to Saul                                                                                                      | 33       |
| Bodily and mental powers of David observed upon                                                                                            | "        |
| War between the Israelites and Philistines                                                                                                 | 34       |
| Goliath's defiance of the Armies of Israel                                                                                                 | "        |
| David's mission from his Father to his Brothers in the Army                                                                                | "        |
| David's challenge of Goliath, and his successful combat with the Giant                                                                     | 35       |
| Consequent discomfiture of the Philistian Forces                                                                                           | 36       |
| Reflections on this great Event                                                                                                            | 36 to 39 |
| David presented to Saul, having Goliath's head in his hand                                                                                 | 39       |
| Jonathan's affectionate regard for David                                                                                                   | "        |
| The concord of love between them                                                                                                           | "        |
| Saul appoints David over the Men of war                                                                                                    | "        |
| Popular praise of David superior to that of Saul: Jealousy excited in Saul consequently to madness and murderous disposition towards David | 40       |
| Reflections thereon                                                                                                                        | "        |
| David's appointment as Captain over a Thousand, and the esteem shewn towards him: Saul's fear of him                                       | 41       |
| Saul's subtle offer of his Daughter Merah to David for marriage, when she was betrothed and shortly afterwards married to Adriel           | 42       |
| David's modesty on the proposal made him                                                                                                   | "        |
| Affection entertained for David by Michal, Saul's other Daughter                                                                           | 43       |
| Saul's malignant purpose in turning this incident to David's destruction                                                                   | "        |
| Proposed dowry required from David, endangering his life in a conflict with Philistines                                                    | "        |
| David's accomplishment of the object stipulated for by Saul, and consequent marriage with Michal                                           | 44       |
| Michal's love for David, and Saul's increased fear and envy of him                                                                         | "        |
| Saul's effort to induce Jonathan to sacrifice David, and Jonathan's proof of devoted attachment to him                                     | 45       |
| Jonathan's remonstrance with his Father on David's behalf, and its favourable effect for the moment                                        | "        |
| Apparent reconciliation through Jonathan's mediation                                                                                       | 46       |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Page.  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| Further success against the Philistines . . . . .                                                                                                                                                             | 46     |
| Saul casts a javelin at David, which he avoids, and escapes . . . . .                                                                                                                                         | "      |
| Michal's contrivance to defeat Saul's purpose to sacrifice David to his jealousy . . . . .                                                                                                                    | "      |
| David goes to Samuel at Ramah . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                       | 47     |
| Saul informed thereof . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                               | "      |
| Saul sends Messengers and goes himself to Ramah: Prophetic Influence produced on All . . . . .                                                                                                                | 48     |
| David removes from Ramah, and has an interview with Jonathan . . . . .                                                                                                                                        | "      |
| David's expostulation at Saul's unmerited treatment of him: Jonathan's promise further to intercede for him . . . . .                                                                                         | "      |
| Jonathan's pledge to David to give him every countenance and succour in his power, and to follow any wish expressed by David . . . . .                                                                        | 49     |
| Plan suggested by David to Jonathan to sound Saul, by Jonathan's permission for David's absence from the King's table on a Festival . . . . .                                                                 | "      |
| Covenant between Jonathan and David of perpetual friendship between them and their Generations . . . . .                                                                                                      | 50     |
| Jonathan arranges to give secret intelligence to David of Saul's feeling on David's absence being made known to him . . . . .                                                                                 | 50, 51 |
| Result of the first day of the Festival . . . . .                                                                                                                                                             | 51     |
| On the second day, when Saul informed by Jonathan, the violence of the King's anger such, that he cast a javelin at Jonathan, which the Prince avoided . . . . .                                              | 51, 52 |
| Effect of such outrage on Jonathan's mind, confirmatory of his fear and grief on David's account . . . . .                                                                                                    | 53     |
| Jonathan's fulfilment of his promise to David . . . . .                                                                                                                                                       | 54     |
| Affecting interview between Jonathan and David, and the piety it exhibiteth . . . . .                                                                                                                         | "      |
| David flees to Nob: His interview with Ahimelech, the Priest, and obtains from him Shew-bread, and Goliath's sword, under a false representation; Doeg, an Edomitish Servant of Saul, being present . . . . . | 55     |
| David's flight to Achish, King of Gath, and feigns madness to escape being treated as an Enemy . . . . .                                                                                                      | 56     |
| His escape to the Cave of Adullam . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                   | "      |
| David's Brethren join him, and about 400 Supporters: their character . . . . .                                                                                                                                | 57     |
| His intercession to have protection given to his Father and Mother by the King of Moab . . . . .                                                                                                              | "      |
| David's removal to the Land of Judah by the warning of the Prophet Gad . . . . .                                                                                                                              | 58     |
| Saul's remonstrance with his Servants as suspecting their favouring David's concealment . . . . .                                                                                                             | "      |
| Doeg's betrayal of David's reception by Ahimelech, the Priest of Nob . . . . .                                                                                                                                | "      |
| Saul's summons of Ahimelech and his Household: the accusation and defence . . . . .                                                                                                                           | 59     |
| Saul's sentence of death upon them: All the Servants, but Doeg, refuse to execute it . . . . .                                                                                                                | "      |
| Fell destruction both of the Priests and of the Inhabitants and City of Nob . . . . .                                                                                                                         | "      |
| Abiathar, the Son of Ahimelech, escapes and flies to David, and is succoured by him . . . . .                                                                                                                 | 60     |
| Keilah being invaded by the Philistines: David consults the Oracle of GOD, and under Such Sanction, decides to go to its relief . . . . .                                                                     | 61     |
| David's Followers beset him with their fears; and David again seeks for and obtains The DIVINE Sanction to go . . . . .                                                                                       | "      |
| David's rescue of Keilah, and acquisition of great spoil . . . . .                                                                                                                                            | 62     |
| David having fears that the Inhabitants of Keilah might betray him to Saul, consults The Oracle, and being thereby Forewarned, leaves Keilah with his Followers . . . . .                                     | "      |
| David in the Wilderness of Zith: Interview there between Jonathan and David: Interchange of a Covenant of love and devotedness between them . . . . .                                                         | 63     |
| The Ziphites betray David's retreat to Saul; his exultation thereat . . . . .                                                                                                                                 | 64     |
| Saul's pursuit of David in the Wilderness of Maon, when called away by a Philistine invasion . . . . .                                                                                                        | 65     |
| David removes to En-gedi, where Saul seeks him; but is himself surprised in the Cave, and the skirt of his garment is secretly cut off by David . . . . .                                                     | "      |
| David restrains his Men, when Saul was thus in his power, from sacrificing him . . . . .                                                                                                                      | 66     |
| David proves to Saul the personal danger he was in; and David's remonstrance at Saul's unjustifiable persecution of him . . . . .                                                                             | "      |
| Saul, stung with Self-condemnation, acknowledges David's righteousness; proclaims his future Succession to the Throne; and exacts an oath of consideration toward Saul's Family, which David gives . . . . .  | 67     |
| Saul's return; but David's continuance at En-gedi . . . . .                                                                                                                                                   | "      |



|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Page.  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| Death of Samuel and his burial, and the general lamentation thereat                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 67     |
| David removes to the Wilderness in Paran in the neighbourhood of Nabal, and his wife Abigail: On their sheep-shearing festival David sends a Deputation to greet them, and to seek his bounty, David and his followers having contributed to watch over their flocks                                                                                                                                                            | 68     |
| Nabal's stern and insulting rejection of David's embassy                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | "      |
| David's exasperation at such unmerited treatment, and resolution to avenge it: Nabal's Servant's representation to Abigail his Wife, of the danger likely to arise from his conduct                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 69     |
| Abigail's wise conduct on the occasion, in her personal intercession with David to avert his anger and impending chastisement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | "      |
| David's pious acknowledgment of Abigail being thus Made an Instrument in GOD'S Hand to Rescue him from the commission of the contemplated slaughter of the whole Household of Nabal                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 70     |
| Abigail cautiously apprizes Nabal of the imminent danger that had been averted from him: the effect thereof: Nabal struck with death                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 71     |
| David treats for marriage with Abigail; and she becomes his Wife                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 72     |
| David's after-marriage with Ahinoam: Michal having been given by Saul to Phalti                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | "      |
| The Ziphites again betray David's retreat; and Saul's pursuit of him: David sends out spies                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | "      |
| David advances on Saul's retirement, and, taking Abishai with him, has Saul in his power, and is urged by Abishai to take his life; but declines, as Saul was The LORD'S Anointed, and takes only his spear and bottle of water                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 72, 73 |
| David's prophetic view of the fatal Destiny awaiting Saul, and of his own Deliverance, from GOD                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 73     |
| David's remonstrance with Abner, the Captain of Saul's Host, for leaving the King defenceless in David's power                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | "      |
| David's expostulation with Saul for his unjustifiable hostility                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | "      |
| Saul's confession of his error; and pronounces a blessing on David                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 74, 75 |
| David's continued fear of Saul leads him to seek refuge in Philistia, with Achish                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | 75     |
| He obtains a grant from Achish of the City of Ziklag                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | "      |
| David's subtle invasion of the Geshurites, Gezerites, and Amalekites, and false representation to Achish, who is thereby led to cherish an Enemy in his confidence                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 75, 76 |
| War between the Philistines and the Israelites renewed; and Achish purposes employing David on the occasion, and to elevate him in his Army                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | "      |
| On the death of Samuel, and on Saul's having put away the Wizards of the Land, Saul consults the Oracle of GOD, but is not Answered; and, amidst his fears, he seeks a revelation from a Familiar Spirit, a Woman at En-dor: Interview between them; and, in the result, the Spirit of Samuel is raised, which confirms the Predetermined Destruction of Saul and his Sons, and the final Establishment of David in the Kingdom | 76, 77 |
| Remonstrance of the Princes of Philistia with Achish for countenancing David; and rejection of him from taking part in the impending battle, as suspected of favouring his own Country's cause: Achish advises him to depart secretly                                                                                                                                                                                           | 79     |
| In David's absence from Ziklag, at the Court of Achish, the Amalekites invade and carry all the Inhabitants and Stock away and burn the City                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 80     |
| The exasperation of his Followers at their calamity almost vented upon David: His exemplary piety under the bereavement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | "      |
| Consulting The DIVINE Oracle, David is encouraged to pursue the Captors: meeting with a deserted Egyptian from their Army, their line of march is disclosed by him, and David and two-thirds of his Followers pursue and put them to the rout, recovering the captives and the plunder, besides great spoil                                                                                                                     | 81     |
| Division of the spoil: David's considerate interference to secure a portion for the third of his Followers, who, from exhaustion, had not been able to join the Force: David points to The GOD of Battles as The SOURCE of their success; and establishes a liberal and general rule for the division of spoil                                                                                                                  | 82     |
| David gratefully sends portions of the spoil to various places, where he and his Men had been wont to sojourn                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 83     |
| Battle between the Philistines and the Israelites in Mount Gilboa: Jonathan and his two Brothers are slain; and Saul, being wounded, seeks death at the hand of his Armour-Bearer, but in vain; and falls on his own sword                                                                                                                                                                                                      | "      |
| Indignities offered by the Philistines to the dead body of Saul: They take possession of the Cities deserted by the routed Israelites                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | "      |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |        |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Page.  |
| Men of Jabesh-Gilead rescue the bodies of Saul and his Sons, and give them honourable burial . . . . .                                                                                                                                                  | 83, 84 |
| An Amalekite, present at Saul's death, stole his crown and bracelet and brought them to David, stating, falsely, that he had slain Saul: David's lamentation at the Death of Saul and Jonathan: he inflicts signal vengeance on the Amalekite . . . . . | 84, 85 |
| The pathetic lament of David . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 86     |
| His illustration of Jonathan's love towards him . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                               | 86     |
| David seeks Counsel from GOD, and is Encouraged to return to Judah, and take possession of Hebron . . . . .                                                                                                                                             | 87     |
| He, with his Wives and Followers, removes to Hebron . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                           | 87     |
| David anointed King over Judah . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 87     |
| In respect for the Men of Jabesh-Gilead, who had done reverence to the Remains of Saul, David sends Messengers to announce his Coronation, and to assure them of his favour . . . . .                                                                   | 87     |
| Ish-bosheth, a surviving Son of Saul, is proclaimed by Abner, the Captain of Saul's Host, King over all Israel . . . . .                                                                                                                                | 88     |
| Time of David's reign over Judah . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 88     |
| Meeting between the Servants of Ish-bosheth under Abner, and the Servants of David under Joab, at the Pool of Gibcon, Twelve on each side, under a feint of trying their skill in play, treacherously kill each other . . . . .                         | 88     |
| A general battle ensues: David's Men the Conquerors: Joab's Brother Ashael pursues Abner, who, after warning him to desist, slays him in his own defence . . . . .                                                                                      | 89     |
| Parley between Abner and Joab, and consequent suspension of hostilities . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                       | 89     |
| Comparative slaughter between the two Forces greatly in favour of David . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                       | 89     |
| Renewal of hostilities between the Houses of Saul and David: The Latter's uniform success . . . . .                                                                                                                                                     | 90     |
| Birth of Sons to David in Hebron . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 90     |
| Rupture between Ish-bosheth and Abner, the Captain of his Host . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                | 90     |
| Abner offers the Kingdom of Israel to David . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 90     |
| David requires, as a preliminary to the negociation, Michal's being restored to him: She is taken, accordingly, from Phaltiel, who manifests extreme grief at the separation . . . . .                                                                  | 90     |
| Abner consults with the Elders of Israel about calling David to the Throne; and then presents the offer to David personally, who receives and entertains him, and parts from him with the assurance of peace . . . . .                                  | 90, 91 |
| Joab, returning from a foray, finding that Abner has been courteously received by David, represents him as still an Enemy in disguise . . . . .                                                                                                         | 92     |
| Joab subtly recalls Abner, and, under a false representation disarming of suspicion of any hostile purpose, privately assassinates him . . . . .                                                                                                        | 92     |
| David's horror at the offence, and his anxiety to stand acquitted of any participation in it: His imprecation of DIVINE Chastisement on Joab . . . . .                                                                                                  | 92     |
| Honourable funeral of Abner: David himself the Chief Mourner: His eulogy on Abner's character . . . . .                                                                                                                                                 | 93     |
| The Popular approval of David's conduct on this occasion and generally . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                        | 93     |
| Ish-bosheth murdered, whilst sleeping in his tent, by two Captains of his Bands, who took his head to David, thinking to gain, thereby, his favour, but who ordered them instantly to be sacrificed for their treason . . . . .                         | 94, 95 |
| Mephibosheth, the Son of Jonathan, first named; and the cause of his lameness from his infancy . . . . .                                                                                                                                                | 94     |
| Presentation of the Elders of Israel to David, and his being anointed King of Israel . . . . .                                                                                                                                                          | 96     |
| David's age and the periods of his reign in Judah and Israel . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                  | 97     |
| David's resentment and Chastisement of the Jebusites . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                          | 97     |
| His continued prosperity under the acknowledgment of DIVINE Countenance . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                       | 97     |
| The King of Tyre's friendly tribute to David, and supply of costly materials for a Royal Palace for him . . . . .                                                                                                                                       | 98     |
| Birth of more Children to David on his removal to Jerusalem . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                   | 98     |
| The Philistines prepare for war against David, and are completely routed in two signal engagements, after David had, on both occasions, consulted The DIVINE Oracle as to the course he should pursue . . . . .                                         | 98, 99 |
| David destroys the idols of the Philistines . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 99     |
| The spread of David's fame amongst the surrounding Nations, and the general dread of his power . . . . .                                                                                                                                                | 100    |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| David's first effort towards removing the Ark of GOD from Judah to Jerusalem                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 100, 101   |
| That effort defeated by The DIVINE Chastisement upon Uzzah's presumption in touching the Ark                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 101        |
| Its deposit with Obed-edom                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 101, 102   |
| Blessings accumulating on Obed-edom whilst the Ark remained under his charge                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 103        |
| David renews the effort to bring the Ark to Jerusalem: The piety observed by him on the occasion: Celebration by a Public Festival and other signs of exultation                                                                                                                                                    | "          |
| Michal's contemptuous remonstrance at David's dancing and playing on the occasion: Consequent withdrawal of his Conjugal affection from her                                                                                                                                                                         | "          |
| Further Description from the Book of Chronicles of David's removal of the Ark to Jerusalem                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 105        |
| The Psalm delivered by him on the occasion                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 106        |
| His Appointment of the several Officers to attend upon the Ark; and description of their several duties                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 110, 111   |
| David's contemplation of building a Temple to the honour and for the worship of GOD; and on consulting the Prophet is encouraged by him to proceed                                                                                                                                                                  | 111        |
| THE ALMIGHTY Injoins the Prophet to declare to David the Mind of The LORD, that he should not build a Temple for worship; but that Office should devolve on his Son                                                                                                                                                 | 113        |
| Indistinct Allusion to The MESSIAH, as The SON of David, and the Everlasting Church to be Founded by Him                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 113, 114   |
| Renewal of hostilities between the Philistines and David                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 115        |
| His slaughter of them and their Allies                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | "          |
| Houging the cattle                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | "          |
| Presents from the King of Hamoth to David                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | "          |
| Dedication by David of the costly spoils he took in his various victories to the Honour of GOD                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | "          |
| DIVINE Protection Continued to him                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 116        |
| David's government and exemplary administration of justice                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | "          |
| The names of his Chief Officers and Ministers of State and of the Church; and Official appointments of his Sons                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 116, 117   |
| David's adoption of Mephibosheth, as the surviving Son of his beloved Jonathan; appropriating to him all the private possessions of Saul                                                                                                                                                                            | 117        |
| Mention of Mephibosheth's Son Micha, and of his Servant Ziba                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | "          |
| Hanun's insult to David's Messengers with an overture of condolence and friendship on the Father's death, and consequent war with him, and the overthrow by David of both Hanun and his Allies the Syrians; The Destruction of Haderezer and his Host; and his Tributary Kings surrender their homage to King David | 118 to 121 |
| Whilst Joab with the Israelitish Army was besieging Rabbah of the Ammonites, David's passion was excited for Bath-sheba, the Wife of Uriah, the Hittite, and illicitly indulged in                                                                                                                                  | 121        |
| Sad consequences of that sinful indulgence: Uriah's nobleness of conduct: David's awful destination of him to destruction                                                                                                                                                                                           | 122        |
| Joab's fulfilment of the King's instructions to procure the slaughter of Uriah by the Enemy; and his report thereof by a Messenger to the King: after the season for the Widow's mourning David takes Bath-sheba to Wife                                                                                            | 123        |
| DIVINE Justice Overtakes David for such offendings, and a Message by the Prophet of The LORD is Sent to him; Beautifully but figuratively told, so as to involve David in an admission of his own iniquity, and awakening an instant repentance of it                                                               | 124        |
| The DIVINE Sentence declared by Nathan to David that the Child of the intercourse with Bath-sheba should die: David's humility and supplication in intercession for the Child                                                                                                                                       | 127        |
| David's reflections on the Child's death, an evidence of his faith in the Resurrection                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | "          |
| The birth of Solomon, David's Son by Bath-sheba                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 130        |
| The DIVINE Favour Prophetically Pronounced towards him                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | "          |
| Capture of Rabbah by Joab; and his loyal proposal to David himself to take possession of it                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | "          |
| Apparent severity in the punishment of the Ammonitish Captives; perhaps "galled" with the yokes put upon them may be the meaning                                                                                                                                                                                    | "          |
| Ungenerous passion of Amnon towards Tamar, the Sister of Absalom, both Sons of David: Jonadab's subtle and pernicious counsel towards its gratification                                                                                                                                                             | 131        |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Success of an artifice practised towards David for the object . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                          | Page.<br>131 |
| Amnon's violence towards Tamar: Her modest and judicious remonstrance:<br>Amnon's cruel rejection of her after the gratification of his passion . . . . .                                                                                        | "            |
| Her distress and lamentation . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 132          |
| On Absalom learning from her the vile treatment Amnon had used towards her,<br>he resolves to await a season for signal vengeance; and takes Tamar to his home . . . . .                                                                         | "            |
| After the lapse of years Absalom prevails on David to let his Brothers, including Amnon, come to his sheep-shearing festival; and, when off his guard from excess of wine, Amnon is murdered by Absalom's Servants . . . . .                     | "            |
| David's agony of grief thereat when the news (at first exaggerated as affecting all his Sons,) was brought . . . . .                                                                                                                             | "            |
| Absalom escapes and takes refuge with a Son of the King of Geshur . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                      | "            |
| After three years' separation, David's partiality for Absalom revives . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                  | "            |
| Joab's device to gratify the King's wish, by obtaining his consent to Absalom's return; but he is ordered not to see the face of the King . . . . .                                                                                              | 135          |
| His personal attraction and abundance of his hair . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                      | 136          |
| His Children, three Sons and a Daughter named Tamar . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                    | "            |
| After two years' seclusion from the King, Absalom contrives to work upon Joab to intercede for an interview, which is obtained; and Absalom is restored to Royal favour . . . . .                                                                | "            |
| Absalom's mode of stealing the hearts of the People from the King, and attaching them to himself . . . . .                                                                                                                                       | 137          |
| He removes to Geshur to favour his subtle design to dethrone the King . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                  | 138          |
| Nature of the plot laid by Absalom to further his traitorous design . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                    | "            |
| Ahithophel, David's Counsellor, won over by Absalom, and other increase of Conspirators . . . . .                                                                                                                                                | "            |
| David decides on flying from Jerusalem, taking his Servants, but leaving ten Concubines in charge of the Palace . . . . .                                                                                                                        | "            |
| The Cherethites and Pelethites and Gittites continue faithful to and follow him . . . . .                                                                                                                                                        | "            |
| Noble devotedness of Ittai, the Gittite, though offered by David freedom from his service . . . . .                                                                                                                                              | "            |
| The King and his Followers pass over the Brook Kedron in their way to the Wilderness: Zadok and the Levites bearing the Ark . . . . .                                                                                                            | "            |
| The King directs Zadok to carry back the Ark into the City . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                             | "            |
| David evidently influenced by a conviction that the Judgment of The LORD in the Foretold Chastisement was upon him . . . . .                                                                                                                     | "            |
| Zadok and Ahimaaz and Jonathan commissioned by David to gain and convey intelligence, covertly, to him of the hostile proceedings . . . . .                                                                                                      | "            |
| David's lamentation on ascending Mount Olivet, with his head covered and his feet bare . . . . .                                                                                                                                                 | "            |
| On David's learning that Ahithophel had proved traitorous, he prays that The LORD would Turn his counsel into foolishness . . . . .                                                                                                              | "            |
| On reaching the top of the Mount David worships JEHOVAH . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                | "            |
| Hushai, the Archite, presents himself to David, and deeply sympathises in the King's discomfiture . . . . .                                                                                                                                      | "            |
| David exhorts Hushai to return to Jerusalem, and, by tendering his counsel to Absalom, seek to over-turn that of Ahithophel . . . . .                                                                                                            | 139          |
| Ziba, the Servant of Mephibosheth, presents supplies to David; but belieth his Master, representing him as seeking to be called to the throne of Israel; whence David, too credulously, confers on him the possessions of Mephibosheth . . . . . | "            |
| Shimei, of the House of Saul, bitterly curseth and insulteth David and his Attendants . . . . .                                                                                                                                                  | 143          |
| Abishai offers to retaliate and to punish Shimei with instant death; but David checks the vindictive spirit, and reproves Abishai, avowing that it was The LORD'S Judgment upon himself . . . . .                                                | "            |
| David and his Followers pursue their flight under weariness . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                            | 144          |
| Absalom comes to Jerusalem and Ahithophel with him . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                     | 145          |
| Hushai presents himself to him, salutes him, and overcomes Absalom's first impression of distrust . . . . .                                                                                                                                      | "            |
| Absalom calls on Ahithophel for counsel, who advises him publicly to defile his Father's Concubines; and the advice is incestuously followed . . . . .                                                                                           | "            |
| Ahithophel offers, with 12,000 Men, to pursue and destroy David, whilst under weariness and distress, and unprepared for defence . . . . .                                                                                                       | "            |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Page     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Absalom, though liking the advice, calls for the counsel of Hushai, who con-<br>futes it; and, by depth of reasoning, induces Absalom to defer the attack,<br>but to make it, eventually, in Person and with increased Forces                                                                                                     | 146      |
| Hushai sends, privately, intelligence to David of Ahithophel's counsel and<br>Absalom's proceedings; and urges David to continue his retreat: a Ser-<br>vant Girl being the Messenger to the Spies; a Lad detects and tells<br>Absalom of the plot, who sends a Guard to seize the Messengers; but<br>another Woman conceals them | "        |
| David, in consequence, passes over Jordan: And Ahithophel, stung with<br>jealousy and defeated ambition, rushes on suicide                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 148      |
| Absalom, with Amasa as Captain of his Host, Crosses Jordan in pursuit of David                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 150      |
| David, on coming to Mahanaim, has resources supplied to him and his Followers<br>by Shobi, and Machir, and Barzillai                                                                                                                                                                                                              | "        |
| David's military arrangement of his Followers, in three divisions, under the<br>several commands of Joab, Abishai, and Ittai: he offered to take part<br>himself in the conflict; but the People prevented his doing so                                                                                                           | 151      |
| The King commanded his three Generals, in the hearing of all his People, to<br>deal gently, for his sake, with Absalom                                                                                                                                                                                                            | "        |
| Engagement between the two hostile Forces; when the victory was with David's<br>Army, and a great destruction in that of Absalom                                                                                                                                                                                                  | "        |
| Absalom caught in the branches of a tree, remains suspended, his mule leaving<br>him; and when Joab is informed of it, he seeks to bribe the Soldier, who<br>brought the news, to kill Absalom; but which the Soldier, in deference<br>to the known wish of the King, nobly declines                                              | 152      |
| Joab himself, therefore, and his Armour-Bearers, pierce the heart of Absa-<br>lom, and he dies                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | "        |
| Joab stays further carnage                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 153      |
| Absalom's body overlaid by a funeral pile of stones: Absalom's pillar                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | "        |
| Ahimaaz asks to be the Bearer of the result of the Battle to David; but Joab<br>defers the permission for a day on account of Absalom's death                                                                                                                                                                                     | "        |
| Cushi is first sent on the embassy                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | "        |
| Ahimaaz renews the entreaty to be allowed to bear tidings to David                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | "        |
| Joab yields consent; and Ahimaaz outruns Cushi                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | "        |
| King David at the gate and the watchman on the tower discover the Messengers<br>approach                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | "        |
| Interview between the King and the two Messengers in succession                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 154      |
| David's deep lamentation at the fate of Absalom                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | "        |
| Joab, on hearing the extravagance of the King's grief at the death of Absalom to<br>the discomfiture of his faithful Subjects and Soldiers, remonstrates with him<br>and prevails on him to reappear in Public, and restore confidence to the People                                                                              | 155      |
| The Tribes of Israel consult together for the recall of the King to the Seat of<br>Government amongst them                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | "        |
| The King sends to the Authorities in Judah, in remonstrance at their delay in<br>recalling him to the Throne: David promising that Amasa should super-<br>sede Joab                                                                                                                                                               | "        |
| The Men of Judah recall the King                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 156      |
| The King is met by the Men of Judah to attend him on his return: And Shimei,<br>who had so grossly insulted him, confesses his sin, and throws himself on<br>the King's mercy: But Abishai counsels the King to inflict summary<br>justice on Shimei: the King indignantly rejects the counsel, and grants<br>Shimei's life       | 157      |
| Mephibosheth's proof of loyalty, and his generous dealing with his offending Steward                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 158      |
| Barzillai's renewed devotedness to the King; and David's adoption of his Son<br>Chimham: The Royal benediction conferred on the venerable Barzillai                                                                                                                                                                               | 158, 159 |
| Rivalship between Judah and the Israelites for forming the Royal Escort                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 159      |
| Sheba influences the Men of Israel to revolt                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | "        |
| David's treatment of his Concubines, whom Absalom had abused                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 160      |
| The King prepares to defeat Sheba's insurrection                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | "        |
| Joab's treacherous slaughter of Amasa, as a Rival in the King's favour                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | "        |
| Advance of David's Army, under Joab and Abishai, upon Sheba's intrench-<br>ment                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 160      |
| Remonstrance and suggestion of a wise-hearted Woman lead to the saving the<br>City and its Inhabitants from destruction, at the only cost of Sheba's head                                                                                                                                                                         | 160, 161 |
| The names and appointments of David's principal Ministers and Officers of State                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 162      |

|                                                                                                                                                                                         | Page.    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Visitation of Famine for three years as a Judgment for cruelties exercised towards the Gibeonites under Saul's reign                                                                    | 163      |
| David seeks to conciliate them to avert a continuance of the Infliction                                                                                                                 | "        |
| At their suggestion he surrenders to them Seven Descendants of Saul; sparing Mephibosheth                                                                                               | "        |
| Rizpah's maternal affection and devotedness; her two Sons being included in the sacrifice                                                                                               | "        |
| The bones of Saul and Jonathan, and of the Seven Sufferers, removed by David from Jabesh-Gilead to Zelak, and placed in the Sepulchre of Kish                                           | "        |
| Renewal of hostilities by the Philistines                                                                                                                                               | 166      |
| David's strength fails: generous and successful efforts to protect him                                                                                                                  | "        |
| Loyal remonstrance against David's further personal exposure to the danger of the battle-field                                                                                          | "        |
| Continued success of David's Followers in after contests with the Philistines, though presenting Giants to the encounter                                                                | "        |
| David's holy hymn of gratitude on The DIVINE Deliverance of him from all his foreign Enemies                                                                                            | 167, 168 |
| David, amongst his latest utterances, proclaims The DIVINE Counsel Imparted to him; and is characterized as the Sweet Psalmist of Israel                                                | 170      |
| Justice Inculcated in Rulers                                                                                                                                                            | "        |
| Desolation foretold of the irretrievably Wicked                                                                                                                                         | "        |
| Royal Record of David's Heroes, and mention of their respective prodigies of valour                                                                                                     | 172      |
| David's forbearance, when water brought to him from a well at Beth-lehem, when in the Philistines' possession                                                                           | "        |
| Further Narrative of distinguished Men of valour, thirty-seven in number                                                                                                                | 173      |
| David's pious protest on the offer of the Benjamites and Men of Judah, under Amasai, to join him                                                                                        | "        |
| The Bands of the different Tribes that came to David in Hebron to support him in the Sovereignty                                                                                        | 174      |
| Celebration of the occurrence, and joy on the occasion                                                                                                                                  | 175      |
| David's inconsiderate distrust of The ALMIGHTY'S Protection by causing the Fighting Men of Israel and of Judah to be numbered                                                           | "        |
| Joab's judicious and faithful remonstrance to induce the King to recall his purpose, but without success                                                                                | "        |
| David becomes sensible of the impiety of the act, and manifests contrition at it                                                                                                        | "        |
| The LORD'S Commission to Gad, the Seer of David, to declare The DIVINE Resolve to Visit the offence with Judgment; but to leave to David the choice of one out of Three Proposed to him | "        |
| David elects to fall into the Hand of The LORD, confessing that His Mercies are Great; and a three days' pestilence is the Visitation, causing an awful destruction of life             | 176      |
| The Narrative of this offending of David stated in the Chronicles as at the instigation of Satan                                                                                        | 176, 177 |
| The Pestilence stayed: David's invocation to have the Punishment confined to himself                                                                                                    | 178      |
| Suggestion to him to raise an Altar to The LORD in the threshing-floor of Araunah: The Latter's loyal devotedness on the occasion: David's piety and sense of justice exemplified       | "        |
| Similar Narrative from the Chronicles                                                                                                                                                   | 179      |
| David's resolve to prepare materials for building a House for DIVINE Worship; and his charge to his Son Solomon to complete the pious pledge of his Father                              | 180      |
| Imprecation of The HEAVENLY Gift of Wisdom and Understanding on Solomon                                                                                                                 | 181      |
| Admonition to Solomon to fulfil The DIVINE Law as Proclaimed by Moses                                                                                                                   | "        |
| David details his course of preparation for The LORD'S House                                                                                                                            | "        |
| David urges the Princes of the Land to co-operate heartily in the great Work                                                                                                            | "        |
| David, declining in physical powers, resigns the reins of government to Solomon                                                                                                         | 182      |
| Grand arrangement by David of appointments amongst the several Tribes; and ordering for religious observances and the offerings of sacrifices                                           | 183      |
| Families of the Priesthood enumerated                                                                                                                                                   | 184      |
| The Choral Band appointed                                                                                                                                                               | "        |
| Twenty-four Courses, each chosen by lot                                                                                                                                                 | 185      |
| Numeration and selection of the Door-keepers and Attendants divided by wards                                                                                                            | 186      |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Page     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Levites set over the Treasury; having the care of successive dedications towards the Glory of The LORD'S House                                                                                                                                                                      | 186      |
| Officers and Judges for the Provinces                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | 187      |
| The monthly Course of Military Distribution, with the Captains and Numbers of each                                                                                                                                                                                                  | ..       |
| The Rulers of the Twelve Tribes of the Israelites                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 188      |
| The Royal Treasurer and several Officers of the Kings Domains: the Farms, Vineyards, Olive Grounds: the Herds, Flocks, and Camels                                                                                                                                                   | ..       |
| Jonathan, David's Uncle, a Counsellor and a Scribe; Jehiel with the King's Sons; Ahithophel, the King's Counsellor; Hushai, the King's Companion; Jehoida and Abiathar after Ahithophel; and Joab the Commander in Chief                                                            | ..       |
| David's summons of all the Grandees of the Nation, when he communicates to them his purpose that a Temple for the Worship of GOD should be built: but acknowledges the Revelation of The DIVINE Will, that the perfecting thereof should descend with the Throne to his Son Solomon | 189      |
| The DIVINE Promise to Solomon conditional on his keeping The LORD'S Commandments                                                                                                                                                                                                    | ..       |
| The King's injunction to his assembled Subjects to search out and observe The LORD'S Commands                                                                                                                                                                                       | ..       |
| The King's pious and parental exhortation to Solomon to serve GOD in spirit and in truth                                                                                                                                                                                            | 190      |
| The Omniscience of JEHOVAH urged on Solomon to induce to his seeking and fulfilling His Will; and Caution given, lest by forsaking The DIVINE Rule, GOD should Cast him off for ever                                                                                                | ..       |
| Solomon encouraged to the Work of building The LORD'S House                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | ..       |
| The Pattern of the Temple and of the Ornaments and Appendages thereof, presented by David to Solomon                                                                                                                                                                                | 190, 191 |
| David assures Solomon that The LORD will Countenance the Work unto its completion                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 191      |
| The Princes and the People, with the Priests and Levites and all skilful Workers, appointed to aid its progress                                                                                                                                                                     | ..       |
| The King's address to the Congregation on behalf of Solomon, enumerating his own appropriations; and calls on his Subjects for contributions, which was readily and liberally responded to                                                                                          | 192      |
| General joy, and the King's delight thereat                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | ..       |
| David's Effusion of praise and thanksgiving to JEHOVAH on the great occasion                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 193      |
| His Patriot prayer, and his supplication for the Gift of a perfect heart to Solomon                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 194      |
| At David's call all the Congregation join in worship, and offered sacrifices; sharing in a general and holy festival                                                                                                                                                                | ..       |
| David's state of senile weakness of body; and relief afforded by Female succour                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 195      |
| Adonijah, the Brother of Absalom, puts forth a claim to succeed to the Throne                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 196      |
| He induces Joab and Abiathar to join him; and prepares a public festival to promote his object                                                                                                                                                                                      | ..       |
| Nathan concert's with Bath-sheba, the Mother of Solomon, to bring the intelligence unto David so as to insure the promised Succession to Solomon                                                                                                                                    | ..       |
| David avows to Bath-sheba that Solomon shall be his Successor                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 197      |
| David arranges for the immediate Proclamation of Solomon as King, and his being anointed as the Ruler over Israel and Judah                                                                                                                                                         | 198      |
| The Public acceptance and loyal hailing of Solomon as King                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 199      |
| Effect of the intelligence on Adonijah and his Comrades                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | ..       |
| The Royal Servant's address to David on Solomon's accession                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 200      |
| David's pious utterance on the event                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | ..       |
| Adonijah's Followers simultaneously forsake him                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | ..       |
| Adonijah flies to the Altar for Protection; and stipulates that, on his surrender, Solomon shall not cause him to be put to death                                                                                                                                                   | ..       |
| Solomon pronounces, conditionally, his pardon, if future wickedness be not found in him: Solomon called him to his presence, when he did homage                                                                                                                                     | ..       |
| David's dying charge to Solomon inculcating obedience to The DIVINE Will, and dependance on The DIVINE Word                                                                                                                                                                         | 201      |
| His unsparing condemnation of Joab and of Shimei; but commendation of the Sons of Barzillai                                                                                                                                                                                         | 202      |
| David's death and burial; and his length of reign over Judah and Israel                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 203      |
| Solomon's confirmation as Successor ratified by all Ranks, and acquiesced in by David's Sons; and The DIVINE Blessing signally Extended to him                                                                                                                                      | ..       |
| Testimony borne to David's memory, as full of riches and honour as of years, in conclusion of the History                                                                                                                                                                           | 203      |

# REFERENCES

TO

## PARTS OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS.

### GENESIS.

|                                  | Page. |
|----------------------------------|-------|
| i, 27 .....                      | 452   |
| ii, 7 .....                      | 709   |
| „ 24 .....                       | 452   |
| iii, 13 .....                    | 386   |
| „ 14, 15 .....                   | 731   |
| iv, 4 to 8 .....                 | 549   |
| v, 2 .....                       | 452   |
| vi, 5 .....                      | 406   |
| „ 5, 7, 8, 13, 14, 17 .....      | 582   |
| vii, 5 to 12, 19, 21 to 23 ..... | 582   |
| viii, 21 .....                   | 406   |
| ix, 6 .....                      | 664   |
| xi, 26, 29, 31, 32 .....         | 6     |
| xii, 3 .....                     | 6     |
| „ 1 to 3, 4 to 8 .....           | 6     |
| xiii, 8, 9 .....                 | 7     |
| xiv, 19, 20, 21 to 24 .....      | 7     |
| „ 15 .....                       | 28    |
| xv, 2 to 6 .....                 | 8     |
| „ 6, 5 .....                     | 26    |
| „ 16 .....                       | 547   |
| xvi, 6 .....                     | 8     |
| xvii, 18 .....                   | 8     |
| „ 1 to 13, 15 to 24 .....        | 9     |
| „ 1 .....                        | 265   |
| „ 7, 8, 19 .....                 | 515   |
| xviii, 1 to 8 .....              | 9     |
| „ 19 .....                       | 10    |
| „ 22 to 27 .....                 | 10    |
| „ 28 to 33 .....                 | 11    |
| xx, 11, 17 .....                 | 12    |
| xxi, 1 to 5, 8, 9 to 14 .....    | 12    |
| „ 25 to 34 .....                 | 14    |
| „ 1 to 3 .....                   | 28    |
| xxii, 1, 2 .....                 | 14    |
| „ 3, 4 .....                     | 15    |
| „ 5 to 8, 10 .....               | 16    |
| „ 11 to 18 .....                 | 17    |
| „ 15, 16, 18 .....               | 731   |
| xxiii .....                      | 17    |
| xxiv, 1 to 8 .....               | 19    |

### GENESIS CONTINUED.

|                        | Page. |
|------------------------|-------|
| xxiv, 9 to 67 .....    | 20    |
| xxv, 1, 5, 6 .....     | 23    |
| „ 7 to 9 .....         | 24    |
| xxvi, 5, 24 .....      | 24    |
| „ 11 .....             | 731   |
| xxviii, 3, 4 .....     | 24    |
| „ 14 .....             | 6     |
| „ 13 .....             | 516   |
| xxxii, 1, 2 .....      | 516   |
| xliv, 10 .....         | 731   |
| xlvi, 2, 3 .....       | 516   |
| xlvi, 29, 30 .....     | 516   |
| xlvi, 18, 25, 26 ..... | 516   |
| „ 33 .....             | 709   |
| „ 10 .....             | 346   |

### EXODUS.

|                                      | Page. |
|--------------------------------------|-------|
| ii, 4 .....                          | 489   |
| iii, 6, 16 .....                     | 25    |
| „ „ .....                            | 515   |
| iv, 12 .....                         | 335   |
| v, 12, 21, 29, 32 .....              | 206   |
| xi, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24 ..... | 206   |
| xii, 1 to 3, 5 to 8, 11 to 14 .....  | 610   |
| „ 16 to 19 .....                     | 626   |
| „ 46 .....                           | 713   |
| xv, 2, 11 to 13 .....                | 516   |
| xx .....                             | 355   |
| „ 5 .....                            | 333   |
| „ 12, 17 .....                       | 402   |
| xxi, 24, 23 .....                    | 262   |
| xxiii, 20 to 22 .....                | 20    |
| xxiv, 5 to 8 .....                   | 641   |
| xxv, 30 .....                        | 358   |
| xxvi, 31 to 33 .....                 | 711   |
| xxix, 32, 33 .....                   | 358   |
| „ 36, 37 .....                       | 541   |
| xxx, 22, 25 to 29 .....              | 541   |
| xxxii, 11, 13, 14 .....              | 24    |
| xxxiii, 13, 14 .....                 | 516   |
| xxxiv, 6, 7 .....                    | 128   |



## LEVITICUS.

|               | Page.              |
|---------------|--------------------|
| v, 1          | 674                |
| vii, 21       | 51                 |
| viii, 32      | 358                |
| xi, 44        | 266                |
| xiv           | 297                |
| xv, 5         | 51                 |
| xvi, 26       | 697                |
| xvii, 1, 11   | 641                |
| xviii, 5      | 27                 |
| xix, 2        | 266                |
| „ 3           | 402                |
| „ 12          | 260                |
| „ 17, 18      | 443                |
| „ 18          | 287, 460, 526, 527 |
| xx, 21        | 392                |
| xxiii, 39, 40 | 481                |
| xxiv, 5 to 9  | 358                |
| „ 16          | 676                |
| „ 20          | 262                |

## NUMBERS.

|                |         |
|----------------|---------|
| ix, 12         | 713     |
| xii, 7         | 416     |
| xiv, 34        | 734     |
| xv, 38 to 40   | 534     |
| xxiii, 10      | 516     |
| xxiv, 17 to 19 | 346     |
| xxv, 12, 13    | 516     |
| xxvii, 15, 17  | 324, 41 |
| xxviii, 13     | 52      |

## DEUTERONOMY.

|                      |          |
|----------------------|----------|
| v                    | 255      |
| „ 1                  | 731      |
| vi, 4, 5             | 525      |
| „ 6 to 9             | 534      |
| „ 13, 14, 16 to 18   | 260, 233 |
| viii, 2, 3           | 231      |
| ix, 26, 27           | 25       |
| x, 12, 13, 16 to 19  | 525      |
| xiii, 1 to 3         | 289, 572 |
| xiv, 8               | 309      |
| xv, 7 to 11          | 263      |
| xvii, 2, 6           | 444, 644 |
| xviii, 15, 17 to 19  | 731, 428 |
| xix, 10              | 694      |
| „ 15                 | 444, 674 |
| „ 21                 | 262      |
| xxi, 1, 3, 4, 6 to 9 | 693      |
| „ 22, 23             | 713      |
| „ 23                 | 27       |

## DEUTERONOMY CONTINUED.

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| xxiii, 25          |  |
| xxiv, 1            |  |
| xxv, 5 to 10       |  |
| „ 5, 6             |  |
| xxvii, 26          |  |
| xxx, 19, 20        |  |
| xxxii, 1 to 12, 15 |  |
| „ 29               |  |
| „ 35, 36           |  |
| „ 43               |  |
| xxxiii, 1 to 3     |  |
| „ 2                |  |

## JOSHUA.

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| i, 2      |  |
| xxiii, 14 |  |
| xxiv, 14  |  |
| „ 32      |  |

## JUDGES.

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| ii, 10 |  |
|--------|--|

## RUTH.

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| i, 1 to 13 |  |
|------------|--|

## 1st SAMUEL.

|                           |      |
|---------------------------|------|
| ii, 1, 6, 9, 10           |      |
| vi, 19                    | 233, |
| vii, 3                    |      |
| xiii, 14                  |      |
| „ 1 to 13                 |      |
| xiv, 24, 26               |      |
| xv, 22                    |      |
| xvi, 14 to 23             |      |
| „ 16                      |      |
| xvii, 1 to 54             |      |
| „ 55 to end               |      |
| xviii, 1 to 5, 6 to 11    |      |
| „ 12 to 16, 17 to 19      |      |
| „ 20 to 23, 24, 25        |      |
| „ 26, 27, 28 to 30        |      |
| xix, 1 to 3, 4 to 6       |      |
| „ 7, 8 to 17              |      |
| „ 18, 19 to 20 and a Half |      |
| „ 20, 24                  |      |
| xx, 1 to 3                |      |
| „ 4 to 8, 9 to 17         |      |
| „ 18 to 23                |      |
| „ 24 to 26, 27 to 33      |      |
| „ 34                      |      |

## 1st SAMUEL CONTINUED.

|                                    | Page. |
|------------------------------------|-------|
| xx, 35 to 40. 41, 42 .....         | 54    |
| xxi, 1 to 9 .....                  | 55    |
| „ 2 to 6 .....                     | 358   |
| „ 10 to 15 .....                   | 56    |
| xxii, 2 .....                      | 56    |
| „ 1, 2, 3, 4 .....                 | 57    |
| „ 5, 6 to 8, 9 to 15 .....         | 58    |
| „ 16 to 19 .....                   | 59    |
| „ 20 to 23 .....                   | 60    |
| xxiii, 1, 2, 3, 4 .....            | 61    |
| „ 5, 6 to 13 .....                 | 62    |
| „ 14 to 18 .....                   | 63    |
| „ 19 to 23 .....                   | 64    |
| „ 24 to 28, 29 .....               | 65    |
| xxiv, 1 to 4 .....                 | 65    |
| „ 5 to 7, 7 to 15 .....            | 66    |
| „ 16 to 22 .....                   | 67    |
| xxv, 1 to 8 .....                  | 67    |
| „ 9 to 11 .....                    | 68    |
| „ 12 to 17, 18 to 35 .....         | 69    |
| „ 14 .....                         | 165   |
| „ 36 to 42 .....                   | 71    |
| „ 43, 44 .....                     | 72    |
| xxvi, 1 to 4, 5 to 12 .....        | 72    |
| „ 13 to 20 .....                   | 73    |
| „ 21 to 25 .....                   | 74    |
| „ 25 .....                         | 75    |
| xxvii, 1, 2, 3 to 6, 7 to 12 ..... | 75    |
| xxviii .....                       | 76    |
| xxix .....                         | 79    |
| xxx, 1 to 6 .....                  | 80    |
| „ 7 to 19 .....                    | 81    |
| „ 20 to 25 .....                   | 82    |
| „ 26, 21 .....                     | 83    |
| xxxi .....                         | 83    |

## 2nd SAMUEL.

|                            |     |
|----------------------------|-----|
| i, 1 to 16 .....           | 84  |
| „ 16 .....                 | 694 |
| „ 17 to 27 .....           | 85  |
| ii, 1 .....                | 86  |
| „ 2, 3, 4, 4 to 7 .....    | 87  |
| „ 8 to 11, 12 to 16 .....  | 88  |
| „ 17 to 32 .....           | 89  |
| iii, 1 to 5, 6 to 21 ..... | 90  |
| „ 22 to 39 .....           | 92  |
| iv .....                   | 94  |
| v, 1 to 3, 4 to 10 .....   | 96  |
| „ 11, 12 .....             | 97  |
| „ 13 to 16, 17 to 25 ..... | 98  |

## 2nd SAMUEL CONTINUED.

|                            | Page.    |
|----------------------------|----------|
| vi, 1 to 5 .....           | 100      |
| „ 6 to 10 .....            | 101      |
| „ 11 to 23 .....           | 103      |
| „ 23 .....                 | 165      |
| vii, 1 to 3 .....          | 111      |
| „ 1 to 17 .....            | 112      |
| „ 18 to 29 .....           | 113      |
| „ 14 .....                 | 415      |
| viii, 1 to 14 .....        | 115      |
| „ 15 to 18 .....           | 162, 116 |
| ix .....                   | 117      |
| x .....                    | 118      |
| xi, 1 to 4 .....           | 121      |
| „ 5 to 17 .....            | 122      |
| „ 18 to 27 .....           | 123      |
| „ 27 .....                 | 124      |
| xii, 1 to 13 .....         | 124      |
| „ 12 .....                 | 126      |
| „ 13 to 23 .....           | 127      |
| „ 24, 25, 26 to 31 .....   | 130      |
| „ 31 .....                 | 150      |
| xiii .....                 | 131      |
| xiv .....                  | 135      |
| xv .....                   | 137      |
| xvi, 1 to 4 .....          | 137      |
| „ 5 to 14 .....            | 143      |
| „ 15 to 19, 20 to 23 ..... | 145      |
| xvii, 1 to 14 .....        | 145      |
| „ 15 to 23 .....           | 148      |
| „ 23 .....                 | 685      |
| „ 24 to 29 .....           | 150      |
| xviii, 1 to 8 .....        | 151      |
| „ 9 to 15 .....            | 152      |
| „ 16 to 33 .....           | 153      |
| xix, 1 to 8, 9 to 14 ..... | 155      |
| „ 15 to 23 .....           | 156      |
| „ 24 to 30, 31 to 40 ..... | 158      |
| „ 40 to 43 .....           | 159      |
| xx, 1, 2 .....             | 159      |
| „ 3, 4 to 22 .....         | 160      |
| „ 23 to 26 .....           | 162      |
| xxi, 1 to 14 .....         | 163      |
| „ 15 to 22 .....           | 166      |
| xxii .....                 | 167      |
| xxiii, 1 to 7 .....        | 170      |
| „ 2 .....                  | 335      |
| „ 8 to 17 .....            | 172      |
| „ 18 to 39 .....           | 173      |
| xxiv, 1 to 15 .....        | 175      |
| „ 16 to 25 .....           | 178      |

## 1st KINGS.

|                        | Page. |
|------------------------|-------|
| i, 1 to 4 .....        | 195   |
| „ 5 to 31 .....        | 196   |
| „ 32 to 37 .....       | 198   |
| „ 38 to 49 .....       | 199   |
| „ 50 to 53 .....       | 200   |
| ii, 1 to 4 .....       | 201   |
| „ 5 to 9 .....         | 202   |
| „ 10, 11 .....         | 203   |
| „ 32 .....             | 694   |
| iii, 13 .....          | 281   |
| viii, 12, 20, 21 ..... | 542   |
| ix, 6 to 9 .....       | 553   |
| x, 1 to 9 .....        | 371   |
| xvii, 8, &c. ....      | 238   |
| „ 21 .....             | 518   |
| xviii, 4 .....         | 249   |
| „ 12 .....             | 230   |

## 2nd KINGS.

|                  |     |
|------------------|-----|
| iv, 1 .....      | 448 |
| „ 42 to 44 ..... | 410 |
| v .....          | 238 |
| vi, 17 .....     | 665 |
| xviii, 17 .....  | 675 |
| xix, 1 .....     | 675 |

## 1st CHRONICLES.

|                         |     |
|-------------------------|-----|
| xi, 1 to 3 .....        | 96  |
| „ 4, 5 .....            | 97  |
| „ 10 to 19 .....        | 172 |
| xii, 16 to 18 .....     | 173 |
| „ 22 to 38 .....        | 174 |
| „ 39, 40 .....          | 175 |
| xiii, 1 to 8 .....      | 101 |
| „ 9 to 13 .....         | 102 |
| „ 14 .....              | 105 |
| xiv, 1, 2, 3 to 7 ..... | 98  |
| „ 8 to 17 .....         | 99  |
| xv .....                | 105 |
| xvi, 1 to 36 .....      | 105 |
| „ 37 to 43 .....        | 110 |
| xvii, 1, 2 .....        | 112 |
| „ 3 to 15 .....         | 113 |
| „ 16 to 27 .....        | 114 |
| „ 11 .....              | 518 |
| xviii, 1 to 13 .....    | 116 |
| „ 14 to 17 .....        | 117 |
| xix .....               | 120 |
| xx, 1 .....             | 122 |
| „ 1 to 3 .....          | 130 |

## 1st CHRONICLES CONTINUED.

|                            | Page. |
|----------------------------|-------|
| xx, 4 to 8 .....           | 166   |
| xxi, 1 to 14 .....         | 176   |
| „ 15 to 27 .....           | 179   |
| „ 28 to 30 .....           | 180   |
| „ 1 .....                  | 386   |
| xxii .....                 | 180   |
| xxiii .....                | 192   |
| xxiv, 1 to 19 .....        | 182   |
| „ 20 to 31 .....           | 184   |
| xxv .....                  | 184   |
| xxvi, 1 to 28 .....        | 186   |
| „ 28 to 32 .....           | 187   |
| xxvii .....                | 187   |
| xxviii, 1 to 8 .....       | 189   |
| „ 9, 10, 11 to 19 .....    | 190   |
| „ 20, 21 .....             | 191   |
| xxix, 1 to 9 .....         | 192   |
| „ 10 to 22 .....           | 193   |
| „ 22 to 25, 26 to 28 ..... | 203   |
| „ 11, 12 .....             | 272   |

## 2nd CHRONICLES.

|                        |     |
|------------------------|-----|
| iii, 14 .....          | 711 |
| vi, 2 .....            | 542 |
| „ 18 .....             | 353 |
| xv, 1 to 7 .....       | 558 |
| xx, 7 .....            | 25  |
| xxiv, 17 to 21 .....   | 530 |
| „ 20, 21 .....         | 498 |
| xxxiii, 10 to 13 ..... | 494 |
| xxxv, 25 .....         | 321 |
| xxxvi, 14 .....        | 500 |
| „ 16 .....             | 498 |

## NEHEMIAH.

|                    |     |
|--------------------|-----|
| ii .....           | 734 |
| v, 5 .....         | 448 |
| viii, 1 to 8 ..... | 531 |
| ix, 6 to 8 .....   | 25  |
| „ 26 .....         | 249 |
| „ 26 .....         | 498 |

## JOB.

|                         |     |
|-------------------------|-----|
| i, 6 .....              | 386 |
| „ 21 .....              | 518 |
| ii, 2, 3 .....          | 386 |
| „ 10 .....              | 518 |
| iii, 13, 17 to 19 ..... | 518 |
| v, 12, 13 .....         | 354 |
| vii, 1 .....            | 518 |

## JOB CONTINUED.

|                          | Page. |
|--------------------------|-------|
| viii, 9 .....            | 518   |
| „ 13 .....               | 543   |
| ix, 8 .....              | 397   |
| xiii, 15, 16 .....       | 408   |
| xiv, 14 .....            | 518   |
| xix, 25 to 27 .....      | 518   |
| xxi, 7. 13. 19, 20 ..... | 518   |
| „ 14, 15 .....           | 309   |
| „ 29, 30 .....           | 518   |
| xxii, 15 to 17 .....     | 310   |
| „ 29 .....               | 537   |
| xxvii, 2 to 6. 8 .....   | 518   |
| xxviii, 17 .....         | 519   |
| „ 28 .....               | 87    |
| xxxi, 1. 4 .....         | 257   |
| xxxiii, 12 .....         | 270   |
| xxxiv, 11, 12 .....      | 424   |
| xxxviii, 41 .....        | 279   |
| xxxix, 27 to 30 .....    | 574   |

## PSALMS.

|                              |          |
|------------------------------|----------|
| ii .....                     | 682      |
| „ 1 .....                    | 615      |
| „ 2 .....                    | 613      |
| „ 7, 8. ....                 | 499, 753 |
| „ 7 .....                    | 398, 415 |
| „ 8 .....                    | 415      |
| „ 10 to 12 .....             | 613      |
| iv, 24. 26, 27 .....         | 499      |
| v, 5 .....                   | 592      |
| vi, 8 .....                  | 607      |
| viii, 4 to 6 .....           | 416      |
| „ 2 .....                    | 485      |
| ix, 7, 8. 17 .....           | 519      |
| x, 17 .....                  | 299      |
| xi, 4 .....                  | 542      |
| xvi, 8 to 11 .....           | 519, 528 |
| „ 9, 10 .....                | 722, 732 |
| xvii, 15 .....               | 519      |
| „ 8 .....                    | 552      |
| xviii, 2 .....               | 416      |
| „ 49 .....                   | 301      |
| xix, 4 .....                 | 565      |
| xxii .....                   | 634      |
| „ 1. 6 to 8. 15 to 18 .....  | 732      |
| „ 6 to 8. 13 to 18. 18 ..... | 702, 703 |
| „ 1 .....                    | 707      |
| „ 22 .....                   | 416, 724 |
| „ 16, 17 .....               | 713      |
| xxiv, 3, 4 .....             | 247      |

## PSALMS CONTINUED.

|                        | Page.    |
|------------------------|----------|
| xxvi, 7 to 9 .....     | 246      |
| „ 8 .....              | 542      |
| xxvii, 11 .....        | 245      |
| „ 12 .....             | 673      |
| „ 4 .....              | 280      |
| xxxi, 5 .....          | 700      |
| xxxii .....            | 126      |
| xxxiv, 7 .....         | 416      |
| „ 20 .....             | 713      |
| xxxv, 13 .....         | 332      |
| „ 11, 12 .....         | 673      |
| xxxvi, 7 to 9 .....    | 519      |
| xxxvii, 25 .....       | 281      |
| „ 28. 37 .....         | 519      |
| xxxviii .....          | 126      |
| xl, 6 .....            | 530      |
| „ 6, 7, 8, &c. ....    | 643      |
| xli, 1 to 3 .....      | 246      |
| „ 9 .....              | 630, 685 |
| „ 12 .....             | 519      |
| xlii, 2 .....          | 519      |
| xlv, 6, 7 .....        | 415      |
| xlvi, 9 .....          | 25       |
| xliv, 6 to 9. 15. .... | 519      |
| l, 3, 4 .....          | 519, 644 |
| „ 8 .....              | 530      |
| li .....               | 126      |
| lii, 8, 9 .....        | 519      |
| lv, 22 .....           | 278      |
| lvii, 15, 16 .....     | 129      |
| lviii, 11 .....        | 519      |
| lxii, 11, 12 .....     | 424, 519 |
| lxv, 2. 4 .....        | 519      |
| lxviii, 20 .....       | 519      |
| „ 18 .....             | 596, 767 |
| lxix, 9 .....          | 483      |
| „ 19 to 21 .....       | 703      |
| „ 21 .....             | 708      |
| lxxiii, 26 .....       | 519      |
| lxxx, 7 to 16 .....    | 495      |
| lxxxvi, 3 .....        | 261      |
| „ 12, 13 .....         | 519      |
| lxxxix, 8, 9 .....     | 307      |
| „ 48 .....             | 519      |
| xc .....               | 110      |
| xci, 9 to 16 .....     | 232      |
| „ 1 to 4 .....         | 552      |
| xcvi, 12, 13 .....     | 519      |
| xcvii, 7 .....         | 415      |
| „ 10 .....             | 520      |

## PSALMS CONTINUED.

|                       | Page.                   |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| xviii, 9              | 520                     |
| cii, 25 to 27. 24     | 416, 580                |
| ciii, 1 to 4. 8 to 14 | 128                     |
| „ 17                  | 520                     |
| „ 21                  | 416                     |
| „ 20, 21              | 440                     |
| civ, 4                | 415                     |
| cv, 1 to 15           | 110                     |
| cvi, 47, 48           | 110                     |
| cvii, 1               | 110                     |
| „ 29                  | 307                     |
| „ 23 to 32            | 399                     |
| cix, 7                | 267                     |
| „ 25                  | 704                     |
| cx, 1                 | 415, 416, 528, 530, 753 |
| „ 4                   | 8, 642                  |
| cxi, 1                | 268                     |
| „                     | 644                     |
| cxv, 17, 18           | 526                     |
| cxvii, 1              | 301                     |
| cxviii, 1             | 110                     |
| „ 26                  | 481                     |
| „ 19, 20              | 500                     |
| „ 23                  | 501                     |
| cxix, 30              | 268                     |
| „ 176                 | 329                     |
| cxxi, 7, 8            | 521                     |
| cxix, 3, 4. 7         | 129                     |
| cxxxi, 1, 2           | 437                     |
| cxixii, 11            | 529, 732                |
| cxixv, 14             | 644                     |
| cxixvi, 1             | 110                     |
| cxixix, 1, 2          | 311                     |
| „ 23, 24              | 520                     |
| cxlv, 18, 19          | 408                     |
| cxlvii, 9             | 279                     |

## PROVERBS.

|              |     |
|--------------|-----|
| iii, 1, 3, 4 | 534 |
| „ 13 to 15   | 388 |
| iv, 18       | 251 |
| vi, 20 to 26 | 257 |
| „ 26         | 393 |
| viii, 11     | 388 |
| „ 17         | 285 |
| ix, 7        | 284 |
| „ 1 to 6     | 506 |
| x, 21        | 389 |
| „ 22         | 19  |
| „ 25         | 520 |

## PROVERBS CONTINUED.

|           | Page.    |
|-----------|----------|
| xii, 28   | 520      |
| xiv, 31   | 606      |
| xv, 8     | 267      |
| „ 24      | 520      |
| „ 23      | 537      |
| xvi, 19   | 244      |
| „ 4. 31   | 520      |
| xvii, 5   | 607      |
| xix, 17   | 606      |
| xx, 22    | 262      |
| xxi, 13   | 451      |
| „ 19      | 454      |
| xxiii, 9  | 284      |
| „ 22      | 402      |
| xxv, 8, 9 | 256      |
| xxix, 23  | 244, 537 |

## ECCLESIASTES.

|                   |          |
|-------------------|----------|
| iii, 17. 19 to 21 | 520      |
| „ 18 to 21        | 709      |
| iv, 4             | 437      |
| v, 1, 2           | 268, 543 |
| „ 2               | 393      |
| xi, 5             | 520      |
| xii, 5 to 7       | 709      |
| „ 7. 13, 14       | 520      |
| „ 14              | 369      |

## ISAIAH.

|                     |     |
|---------------------|-----|
| i, 13 to 15. 16, 17 | 52  |
| ii, 2, 3            | 300 |
| „ 2                 | 384 |
| „ 19                | 701 |
| iii, 10, 11. 13     | 520 |
| „ 15                | 301 |
| iv, 4               | 416 |
| v, 1 to 7           | 495 |
| vi, 9, 10           | 377 |
| vii, 14             | 732 |
| viii, 12, 13        | 339 |
| „ 10                | 416 |
| „ 13 to 15          | 502 |
| ix, 13, 14. 16      | 404 |
| „ 2. 6, 7           | 732 |
| x, 1 to 3. 6        | 218 |
| xi, 1, 2            | 229 |
| „ 10                | 300 |
| „ 1. 10             | 301 |
| xiii, 6 to 11. 13   | 575 |
| xxv, 6, 8, 9        | 520 |

## ISAIAH CONTINUED.

|                     | Page.         |
|---------------------|---------------|
| xxv, 8              | 710           |
| xxvi, 4, 17, 19     | 520           |
| xxviii, 16          | 501, 502      |
| xxix, 18, 19, 24    | 347           |
| „ 14                | 354           |
| „ 13, 14            | 402           |
| „ 15, 16            | 592           |
| xxx, 18             | 354           |
| xxxii, 17           | 520           |
| xxxv, 4 to 6        | 347, 484      |
| „ 3 to 6            | 410           |
| xl, 2 to 5, 9 to 11 | 732           |
| xli, 8              | 25            |
| xlii, 1             | 229, 428      |
| „ 6, 7              | 347           |
| „ 1 to 3            | 362           |
| xliii, 1, 2         | 232           |
| xliv, 2, 3          | 227           |
| „ 25                | 354           |
| xlvi, 22            | 520           |
| xlvi, 24 to 26      | 366           |
| „ 7                 | 390           |
| l, 6                | 676, 732      |
| li, 5, 6            | 520           |
| „ 4 to 6            | 580           |
| lii, 10             | 521           |
| „ 9, 10             | 759           |
| „ 7                 | 759, 760      |
| liii, 1             | 760           |
| „ 5                 | 304, 532      |
| „ 6                 | 319           |
| „                   | 390, 732      |
| „ 3 to 6, 3, 5      | 634, 676, 694 |
| „ 7                 | 674           |
| „ 12                | 699           |
| „ 9                 | 714           |
| liv, 1              | 28            |
| „ 4                 | 760           |
| lv, 1, 2            | 245, 387      |
| „ 5, 6              | 256           |
| „ 3                 | 521           |
| „ 1 to 5            | 733           |
| lvi, 1 to 7, 7      | 483           |
| lvii, 15            | 244           |
| lviii, 4 to 11      | 274           |
| „ 7, 8              | 605           |
| lix, 20             | 733           |
| lx, 12              | 502           |
| lxi, 1 to 3         | 237           |
| „ 2, 3              | 244           |

## ISAIAH CONTINUED.

|              | Page. |
|--------------|-------|
| lxi, 10      | 508   |
| lxiv, 4      | 521   |
| lxv, 8 to 19 | 243   |
| „ 3 to 5     | 309   |
| lxvi, 2      | 243   |
| „ 1, 2       | 261   |
| „ 1          | 542   |

## JEREMIAH.

|                                       |          |
|---------------------------------------|----------|
| ii, 21                                | 496      |
| iv, 3, 4                              | 381      |
| vi, 16                                | 521      |
| vii, 2, 3, 8 to 11                    | 484      |
| viii, 7 to 9                          | 295      |
| „ 9                                   | 354      |
| ix, 23, 24                            | 354      |
| xiv, 12                               | 274      |
| „ 14 to 16                            | 557      |
| xv, 9                                 | 709      |
| xvii, 10                              | 521      |
| xxiii, 5, 6                           | 5, 733   |
| „ 9 to 11, 13 to 18, 21, 22, 25 to 28 | 289      |
| xxvi, 18                              | 554      |
| xxix, 10 to 14                        | 285      |
| xxxi, 16                              | 219      |
| „ 31 to 34                            | 613, 641 |
| „ 33                                  | 644      |
| xxxii, 18, 19                         | 424      |
| „ 17, 19                              | 461, 521 |
| xxxiii, 14, 15                        | 733      |
| li, 5, 6                              | 521      |

## LAMENTATIONS.

|                       |     |
|-----------------------|-----|
| i, 12                 | 708 |
| „ 19                  | 709 |
| iii, 22 to 26, 31, 32 | 521 |
| „ 31, 32              | 408 |
| „ 57                  | 399 |

## EZEKIEL.

|                  |     |
|------------------|-----|
| iii, 14          | 230 |
| iv, 6            | 734 |
| viii, 3          | 230 |
| xi, 24           | 230 |
| xii, 1, 2        | 377 |
| xiv, 12, 10, 14  | 730 |
| xviii, 5, 7 to 9 | 603 |
| xx, 38           | 602 |
| xxxii, 7, 8      | 575 |
| xxxiii, 30 to 32 | 380 |

## EZEKIEL CONTINUED.

|                        | Page. |
|------------------------|-------|
| xxxiv .....            | 324   |
| „ 11 to 17. 20 .....   | 602   |
| „ 20. 22 to 24 .....   | 733   |
| xxxvi, 20 to 23 .....  | 532   |
| xxxvii, 12 to 14 ..... | 521   |
| „ 21. 25, 26 .....     | 521   |
| „ 21 to 28 .....       | 733   |
| xliii, 5 .....         | 230   |

## DANIEL.

|                       |                         |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| ii, 44 .....          | 365, 688                |
| „ 44, 45 .....        | 502                     |
| vii, 13, 14 .....     | 365, 576, 674, 688, 753 |
| „ 9, 10, 13, 14 ..... | 424                     |
| „ 9 to 11 .....       | 575                     |
| „ 9, 10 .....         | 665                     |
| „ 10, 14 .....        | 576                     |
| viii, 15 .....        | 429                     |
| ix, 24, 25 .....      | 346                     |
| „ 26 .....            | 506, 634                |
| „ 25 to 27 .....      | 567                     |
| „ 20 to 27 .....      | 733                     |
| x, 2, 3 .....         | 274                     |
| „ 2. 14 to 19 .....   | 429                     |
| „ 5 to 7 .....        | 719                     |
| xii, 1 to 3 .....     | 521, 670                |
| „ 8, 9, 13 .....      | 521                     |
| „ 11, 12, 13 .....    | 567                     |
| „ 2, 3 .....          | 60                      |

## HOSEA.

|                      |     |
|----------------------|-----|
| vi, 1. 3. 6 .....    | 315 |
| „ 1, 2 .....         | 522 |
| „ 4. 6 .....         | 543 |
| „ 6 .....            | 358 |
| x, 8 .....           | 701 |
| xiii, 4. 14. 9 ..... | 522 |

## JOEL.

|                                |     |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| ii, 1, 2. 10, 11. 30, 31 ..... | 575 |
| „ 1 .....                      | 522 |
| „ 28 to 31 .....               | 430 |
| iii, 8. 12, 13 .....           | 386 |
| „ 14 to 16 .....               | 576 |
| v, 16 .....                    | 576 |

## AMOS.

|                 |          |
|-----------------|----------|
| v, 18. 20 ..... | 576      |
| viii, 9 .....   | 576, 706 |

## JONAH.

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| iii ..... |  |
|-----------|--|

## MICAH.

|                                |      |
|--------------------------------|------|
| iii, 5. 10. 11. 6, 7. 12 ..... |      |
| „ 9 to 12 .....                |      |
| iv, 1 .....                    |      |
| vi, 6 to 8 .....               |      |
| „ 8 .....                      |      |
| vii, 6 .....                   |      |
| „ 7 to 9. 18 to 20 .....       |      |
| „ 18 to 20 .....               |      |
| „ 18, 19 .....                 | 128, |

## NAHUM.

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| i, 15 ..... |  |
|-------------|--|

## HABAKKUK.

|                   |     |
|-------------------|-----|
| i, 12 .....       |     |
| „ 13 .....        |     |
| ii, 4 .....       | 27, |
| iii, 17, 18 ..... |     |

## ZEPHANIAH.

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| ii, 1 to 3 ..... |  |
|------------------|--|

## HAGGAI.

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| ii, 20 to 22 ..... |  |
|--------------------|--|

## ZECHARIAH.

|                      |        |
|----------------------|--------|
| iii, 1 .....         | 3      |
| vi, 12, 13 .....     | 4      |
| vii, 8 to 13 .....   | 3      |
| ix, 9 .....          | 4      |
| xi, 12, 13 .....     | 625, 6 |
| xii, 9, 10, 12 ..... | 5      |
| „ 10 .....           | 7      |
| xiii, 7 to 9 .....   | 6      |
| xiv, 1, 2 .....      | 5      |
| „ 1. 5 .....         | 6      |

## MALACHI.

|                            |        |
|----------------------------|--------|
| i, 6 .....                 | 5      |
| „ 11 .....                 | 3      |
| ii, 1, 2. 7, 8. 5, 6 ..... | 4      |
| „ 6 .....                  | 2      |
| „ 7, 8 .....               | 5      |
| „ 7 .....                  | 5      |
| „ 14 to 16 .....           | 4      |
| iii, 1 to 3 .....          | 228, 7 |
| „ 1 .....                  | 348, 3 |

## MALACHI CONTINUED.

|                     | Page.    |
|---------------------|----------|
| iii, 16 to 18 ..... | 522      |
| „ 17, 18 .....      | 383      |
| iv, 1 to 3 .....    | 383      |
| „ 1, 2, 5, 6 .....  | 735      |
| „ 1, 2 .....        | 522      |
| „ 5, 6 .....        | 350, 429 |

## ST. MARK.

|                            |     |
|----------------------------|-----|
| i, 1 to 4 .....            | 223 |
| „ 4 to 6 .....             | 224 |
| „ 6 to 8 .....             | 227 |
| „ 9 to 11 .....            | 228 |
| „ 12, 13 .....             | 230 |
| „ 14 .....                 | 237 |
| „ 14, 15 .....             | 238 |
| „ 30, 31 .....             | 303 |
| „ 32, 34 .....             | 304 |
| „ 40 to 42 .....           | 297 |
| ii, 1 to 5 .....           | 310 |
| „ 6, 7, 8, 9 .....         | 311 |
| „ 10, 11, 12, 13 .....     | 312 |
| „ 12, 13, 14 .....         | 313 |
| „ 15, 16 .....             | 314 |
| „ 17, 18 .....             | 316 |
| „ 19, 20 .....             | 317 |
| „ 21, 22 .....             | 318 |
| „ 23 to 28 .....           | 55  |
| „ 23, 24 .....             | 357 |
| iii, 1, 2 .....            | 359 |
| „ 3 to 5, 6 .....          | 361 |
| „ 7 to 11 .....            | 362 |
| „ 11, 12 .....             | 363 |
| „ 19 to 22, 23 to 26 ..... | 364 |
| „ 28 to 30 .....           | 367 |
| „ 31 to 35 .....           | 374 |
| „ 13 to 19 .....           | 243 |
| „ 13 to 15 .....           | 327 |
| „ 16 to 19 .....           | 328 |
| iv, 1 to 9 .....           | 376 |
| „ 10 to 12 .....           | 378 |
| „ 13 to 15 .....           | 379 |
| „ 16, 17 .....             | 380 |
| „ 18, 19 .....             | 381 |
| „ 20 .....                 | 382 |
| „ 30 to 32 .....           | 384 |
| „ 33, 34 .....             | 385 |
| „ 21, 22 .....             | 251 |
| „ 35 to 41 .....           | 307 |
| „ 22 .....                 | 338 |
| „ 25 .....                 | 598 |

## ST. MARK CONTINUED.

|                                | Page.    |
|--------------------------------|----------|
| v, 1 to 20 .....               | 309      |
| „ 22, 23 .....                 | 318      |
| „ 24, 25 to 28, 29 to 34 ..... | 319      |
| „ 35 to 40 .....               | 320      |
| „ 40 to 42 .....               | 321      |
| vi, 3 .....                    | 206      |
| „ 8, 9 .....                   | 331      |
| „ 11 .....                     | 332      |
| „ 1, 2 .....                   | 389      |
| „ 3 to 6 .....                 | 390      |
| „ 14 to 29 .....               | 392      |
| „ 30 to 32, 33, 34 .....       | 394      |
| „ 35 to 41 .....               | 395      |
| „ 45 to 47 .....               | 396      |
| „ 48 to 50 .....               | 397      |
| „ 51, 52 .....                 | 398      |
| „ 53 to 56 .....               | 400      |
| „ 48 .....                     | 736      |
| vii, 1, 2, 5 .....             | 401      |
| „ 3, 4 .....                   | 400, 545 |
| „ 6 to 9 .....                 | 403      |
| „ 9 to 13 .....                | 402      |
| „ 14 to 16 .....               | 403      |
| „ 17 to 23 .....               | 406      |
| „ 24 to 30 .....               | 408      |
| „ 31 to 37 .....               | 409      |
| viii, 1 to 9 .....             | 410      |
| „ 10 to 13 .....               | 411      |
| „ 14, 15 .....                 | 413      |
| „ 16 to 21, 27, 28 .....       | 414      |
| „ 29 .....                     | 415      |
| „ 30 .....                     | 418      |
| „ 31, 32 .....                 | 419      |
| „ 33 .....                     | 420      |
| „ 34 to 37 .....               | 421      |
| „ 38 .....                     | 423      |
| „ 26 .....                     | 352      |
| ix, 1 .....                    | 425      |
| „ 2 to 4 .....                 | 426      |
| „ 5, 6 .....                   | 427      |
| „ 8, 9, 10 .....               | 429      |
| „ 11 to 13 .....               | 430      |
| „ 14 to 27 .....               | 431      |
| „ 28, 29 .....                 | 433      |
| „ 30 to 32 .....               | 434      |
| „ 33 .....                     | 436      |
| „ 33 to 37 .....               | 437, 763 |
| „ 37, 42 .....                 | 438      |
| „ 43 to 50 .....               | 440      |
| „ 43 to 48 .....               | 258      |



## ST. MARK CONTINUED.

|                                | Page.    |
|--------------------------------|----------|
| ix, 49, 50 .....               | 250      |
| „ 41 .....                     | 345, 606 |
| „ 43, 44 .....                 | 608      |
| „ 11, 12 .....                 | 634      |
| x, 1 .....                     | 451      |
| „ 1 to 12 .....                | 453      |
| „ 13 to 16 .....               | 456      |
| „ 17 to 27 .....               | 457      |
| „ 28 to 31 .....               | 464      |
| „ 32 to 34 .....               | 469      |
| „ 35 to 40 .....               | 470      |
| „ 41 to 45 .....               | 472      |
| „ 46 to 52 .....               | 475      |
| „ 2 to 12 .....                | 259      |
| „ 29 to 30 .....               | 240      |
| „ 47 .....                     | 206      |
| xi, 1 to 10 .....              | 477      |
| „ 15 to 17 .....               | 483      |
| „ 17, 18 .....                 | 485      |
| „ 11. 12 to 14. 20 to 24 ..... | 433, 486 |
| „ 27 to 33 .....               | 488      |
| „ 10 .....                     | 206      |
| „ 25, 26 .....                 | 273, 447 |
| xii, 1 to 9 .....              | 497      |
| „ 10 to 12 .....               | 501      |
| „ 13 to 17 .....               | 509      |
| „ 18 to 27 .....               | 513      |
| „ 28 to 34 .....               | 524      |
| „ 35 to 37 .....               | 206, 528 |
| „ 38 to 40 .....               | 532, 539 |
| xiii, 1, 2 .....               | 553      |
| „ 3 to 13 .....                | 555      |
| „ 14 to 27 .....               | 567      |
| „ 28, 29 .....                 | 579      |
| „ 30, 31 .....                 | 580      |
| „ 33 to 37 .....               | 584      |
| „ 9 .....                      | 334      |
| „ 11 .....                     | 335      |
| „ 12, 13 .....                 | 336      |
| xiv, 1 .....                   | 610      |
| „ 1, 2 .....                   | 612      |
| „ 3 to 9 .....                 | 615      |
| „ 10, 11 .....                 | 623      |
| „ 12 to 16 .....               | 628      |
| „ 17 to 21 .....               | 630      |
| „ 22 to 25 .....               | 639      |
| „ 25 .....                     | 645      |
| „ 26 to 28 .....               | 646      |
| „ 29 to 31 .....               | 649      |
| „ 32 to 36 .....               | 652      |

## ST. MARK CONTINUED.

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| xiv, 37, 38 .....    | I |
| „ 39, 40 .....       |   |
| „ 41, 42 .....       |   |
| „ 43 to 46 .....     |   |
| „ 47 .....           |   |
| „ 48, 49 .....       |   |
| „ 50, 51, 52 .....   |   |
| „ 53, 55 to 65 ..... |   |
| „ 54, 66 to 72 ..... |   |
| xv, 1 .....          |   |
| „ 2 to 5 .....       |   |
| „ 6 to 15 .....      |   |
| „ 16 to 20 .....     |   |
| „ 21 .....           |   |
| „ 22 to 32 .....     |   |
| „ 33 .....           |   |
| „ 34 to 36 .....     |   |
| „ 37 .....           |   |
| „ 38, 39 .....       |   |
| „ 40, 41 .....       |   |
| „ 42 to 47 .....     |   |
| xvi, 1 to 5 .....    |   |
| „ 6 to 8 .....       |   |
| „ 9 .....            |   |
| „ 9 to 11 .....      |   |
| „ 12 to 14 .....     |   |
| „ 15 to 18 .....     |   |
| „ 19, 20 .....       |   |

## ST. LUKE.

|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| i .....                    |  |
| „ 15 to 17 .....           |  |
| „ 16, 17 .....             |  |
| „ 11 to 13. 15 to 17 ..... |  |
| „ 26, 32, 33 .....         |  |
| „ 68 .....                 |  |
| ii, 1 to 21 .....          |  |
| „ 4, 5 .....               |  |
| „ 39 to 52 .....           |  |
| iii, 2 to 6 .....          |  |
| „ 7, 8 .....               |  |
| „ 9, 10 to 14 .....        |  |
| „ 15 to 17, 18 .....       |  |
| „ 18 to 22 .....           |  |
| „ 23 to 38 .....           |  |
| „ 23 .....                 |  |
| „ 9 .....                  |  |
| „ 12, 13 .....             |  |
| iv, 1 .....                |  |
| „ 2, 3, 4 .....            |  |

## ST. LUKE CONTINUED.

|                                | Page. |
|--------------------------------|-------|
| iv, 9 to 12 .....              | 233   |
| „ 5 to 8 .....                 | 234   |
| „ 13 .....                     | 235   |
| „ 14 to 32 .....               | 237   |
| „ 14 to 27 .....               | 389   |
| „ 28 to 32 .....               | 390   |
| „ 41 .....                     | 398   |
| v, 1 to 11 .....               | 239   |
| „ 12, 13 .....                 | 297   |
| „ 14, 15 .....                 | 298   |
| „ 18 to 20, 21 .....           | 311   |
| „ 22, 23, 24, 25 .....         | 312   |
| „ 26, 27, 28 .....             | 313   |
| „ 31, 32, 33 .....             | 316   |
| „ 34, 35 .....                 | 317   |
| „ 36, 39 .....                 | 318   |
| „ 4, &c. ....                  | 744   |
| vi, 1 to 5 .....               | 55    |
| „ 1, 2 .....                   | 357   |
| „ 6, 7 .....                   | 359   |
| „ 6 to 10 .....                | 361   |
| „ 11 .....                     | 362   |
| „ 20, 12 to 20 .....           | 243   |
| „ 21 .....                     | 244   |
| „ 22, 23 .....                 | 248   |
| „ 29, 30 to 34, 35 to 38 ..... | 263   |
| „ 27, 28, 32 to 35 .....       | 265   |
| „ 37, 38 .....                 | 282   |
| „ 41, 42 .....                 | 283   |
| „ 31 to 36 .....               | 287   |
| „ 44, 43, 45 .....             | 291   |
| „ 46 .....                     | 293   |
| „ 46 to 48 .....               | 298   |
| „ 12 to 16 .....               | 328   |
| „ 40 .....                     | 337   |
| „ 43, 44 .....                 | 368   |
| „ 45 .....                     | 369   |
| „ 19 .....                     | 400   |
| „ 39 .....                     | 405   |
| vii, 1 to 7 .....              | 298   |
| „ 10 .....                     | 302   |
| „ 19, 18 .....                 | 346   |
| „ 20 to 22 .....               | 347   |
| „ 23, 24 to 26 .....           | 348   |
| „ 26 to 28, 28 .....           | 349   |
| „ 28 to 34 .....               | 351   |
| „ 35 .....                     | 352   |
| „ 16 .....                     | 482   |
| „ 29, 30 .....                 | 489   |
| „ 36 to 50 .....               | 616   |

## ST. LUKE CONTINUED.

|                              | Page.    |
|------------------------------|----------|
| viii, 4 to 8 .....           | 377      |
| „ 42, 43, 44, 44 to 48 ..... | 319      |
| „ 49 to 53 .....             | 320      |
| „ 55, 56, 54, 55 .....       | 321      |
| „ 9, 10 .....                | 378      |
| „ 11, 12, 13 .....           | 380      |
| „ 14 .....                   | 381      |
| „ 15 .....                   | 382      |
| „ 16 to 18 .....             | 251      |
| „ 19 to 21 .....             | 374      |
| „ 41, 42 .....               | 318      |
| „ 18 .....                   | 598      |
| „ 22 to 25 .....             | 307      |
| „ 1 to 3 .....               | 712      |
| „ 36 to 39 .....             | 309      |
| ix, 1 .....                  | 327      |
| „ 2 .....                    | 330      |
| „ 3 .....                    | 331      |
| „ 5 .....                    | 332      |
| „ 10, 11 .....               | 352, 394 |
| „ 7 to 9 .....               | 391      |
| „ 12 to 17 .....             | 395      |
| „ 20 .....                   | 415      |
| „ 21, 22 .....               | 418      |
| „ 26 .....                   | 424      |
| „ 27 .....                   | 425      |
| „ 28 to 31 .....             | 426      |
| „ 32 to 34 .....             | 427      |
| „ 36 .....                   | 429      |
| „ 37 to 43 .....             | 432      |
| „ 43 to 45 .....             | 434      |
| „ 46 to 48 .....             | 437      |
| „ 48 .....                   | 438      |
| „ 25 .....                   | 440      |
| „ 56 .....                   | 441      |
| „ 16 to 48 .....             | 764      |
| „ 57, 58, 59 .....           | 305      |
| „ 60 to 62 .....             | 306      |
| x, 1, 2 .....                | 327      |
| „ 4 .....                    | 331      |
| „ 4 to 8, 5 to 12 .....      | 332      |
| „ 3 .....                    | 333      |
| „ 13 .....                   | 352      |
| „ 10 to 16 .....             | 353      |
| „ 21 .....                   | 354      |
| „ 22 .....                   | 355, 753 |
| „ 25 to 37 .....             | 525      |
| „ 41, 42 .....               | 280      |
| xi, 33 to 36 .....           | 251      |
| „ 34 to 36 .....             | 276      |

## ST. LUKE CONTINUED.

|                           | Page. |
|---------------------------|-------|
| xi, 9, 10, 11 to 13 ..... | 285   |
| „ 14 .....                | 363   |
| „ 15, 16 to 19 .....      | 364   |
| „ 20 .....                | 365   |
| „ 21, 22 .....            | 366   |
| „ 23 .....                | 367   |
| „ 29 to 32 .....          | 371   |
| „ 24 to 26 .....          | 373   |
| „ 16, 29, 32 .....        | 411   |
| „ 7 to 9 .....            | 414   |
| „ 45, 46 .....            | 533   |
| „ 52 .....                | 539   |
| „ 42 .....                | 543   |
| „ 37 to 40 .....          | 545   |
| „ 47 to 51 .....          | 548   |
| xii, 58, 59 .....         | 256   |
| „ 33, 34 .....            | 276   |
| „ 22, 23, 24 .....        | 279   |
| „ 25, 28 .....            | 280   |
| „ 29, 30, 31 .....        | 281   |
| „ 11, 12 .....            | 335   |
| „ 2, 3 .....              | 338   |
| „ 4, 5, 6, 7 .....        | 340   |
| „ 8, 9 .....              | 341   |
| „ 49, 51 to 53 .....      | 343   |
| „ 10 .....                | 368   |
| „ 1 to 3 .....            | 413   |
| „ 50, 51 .....            | 471   |
| „ 39, 40 .....            | 584   |
| „ 42 to 44 .....          | 585   |
| „ 45, 46 .....            | 586   |
| „ 35 to 38 .....          | 590   |
| xiii, 28 .....            | 25    |
| „ 29, 30 .....            | 301   |
| „ 33 to 35 .....          | 551   |
| „ 25 to 28 .....          | 591   |
| xiv, 26 .....             | 13    |
| „ 34, 35 .....            | 250   |
| „ 12 to 14 .....          | 267   |
| „ 26 .....                | 343   |
| „ 27 .....                | 344   |
| „ 25 to 27 .....          | 421   |
| „ 15 to 24 .....          | 505   |
| „ 1, 7 to 11 .....        | 537   |
| xv, 1, 2 .....            | 314   |
| „ 3 to 7 .....            | 442   |
| „ 11 to 32 .....          | 494   |
| xvi, 14 to 17 .....       | 253   |
| „ 14, 15 to 18 .....      | 259   |
| „ 13 .....                | 278   |

## ST. LUKE CONTINUED.

|                            | Page.    |
|----------------------------|----------|
| xvi, 16, 17 .....          | 350      |
| „ 14 to 18 .....           | 454      |
| xvii, 20, 21 .....         | 365      |
| „ 5, 6 .....               | 434, 487 |
| „ 1, 2 .....               | 439      |
| „ 3, 4 .....               | 445      |
| „ 26 to 30, 34 to 36 ..... | 583      |
| xviii, 1 .....             | 284      |
| „ 31 to 34 .....           | 419      |
| „ 15 to 17 .....           | 456      |
| „ 18 to 27 .....           | 458      |
| „ 28 to 30 .....           | 465      |
| „ 31 to 34 .....           | 468      |
| „ 35 to 43 .....           | 476      |
| „ 9 to 14 .....            | 538      |
| xix, 9 .....               | 25       |
| „ 10 .....                 | 442      |
| „ 28 to 40 .....           | 478      |
| „ 45, 46 .....             | 483      |
| „ 41 to 44 .....           | 554      |
| „ 11 to 27 .....           | 594      |
| xx, 1 to 8 .....           | 459      |
| „ 9 to 16, 17, 18 .....    | 497      |
| „ 17 to 19 .....           | 501      |
| „ 19 to 26 .....           | 509      |
| „ 27 to 38 .....           | 513      |
| „ 41 to 44 .....           | 528      |
| „ 45 to 47 .....           | 532      |
| „ 46, 47 .....             | 539      |
| xxi, 12, 13 .....          | 334      |
| „ 15, 14, 15 .....         | 335      |
| „ 16 to 19 .....           | 336      |
| „ 5, 6 .....               | 553      |
| „ 5 to 13 .....            | 559      |
| „ 20 to 28 .....           | 568      |
| „ 29 to 31 .....           | 579      |
| „ 32, 33 .....             | 580      |
| xxii, 35, 36 .....         | 331      |
| „ 24 to 27 .....           | 437, 472 |
| „ 28 to 30 .....           | 464      |
| „ 26 .....                 | 466      |
| „ 38, 29 .....             | 586      |
| „ 1 .....                  | 610      |
| „ 2 .....                  | 613      |
| „ 3 to 6 .....             | 624      |
| „ 7 to 13 .....            | 628      |
| „ 14, 21 to 23 .....       | 630      |
| „ 19, 20 .....             | 639      |
| „ 18 .....                 | 645      |
| „ 31 to 34 .....           | 649      |

## ST. LUKE CONTINUED.

|                                    | Page.    |
|------------------------------------|----------|
| xxii, 39 to 44 .....               | 653      |
| „ 45, 46 .....                     | 658      |
| „ 47, 48 .....                     | 661      |
| „ 49 to 51 .....                   | 664      |
| „ 52, 53 .....                     | 666      |
| „ 54, 63 to 71 .....               | 670      |
| „ 54 to 62 .....                   | 679      |
| „ 66 .....                         | 682      |
| xxiii, 31 .....                    | 265      |
| „ 2 .....                          | 510      |
| „ 26 to 29 .....                   | 569      |
| „ 1 .....                          | 682      |
| „ 1 to 12 .....                    | 688      |
| „ 13 to 25 .....                   | 692      |
| „ 11 .....                         | 695      |
| „ 23 .....                         | 696      |
| „ 46, 27 to 43 .....               | 700      |
| „ 44 .....                         | 707      |
| „ 46 .....                         | 708, 709 |
| „ 45, 47 .....                     | 711      |
| „ 48, 49, 27 .....                 | 712      |
| „ 50 to 55 .....                   | 715      |
| „ 56 .....                         | 717      |
| „ 5, 19 .....                      | 719      |
| xxiv, 47 .....                     | 316      |
| „ 1, 4 to 9, 11, 12 .....          | 419      |
| „ 13, 25 to 27, 36, 44 to 46 ..... | 634      |
| „ 44 to 47 .....                   | 665      |
| „ 1 to 4 .....                     | 719      |
| „ 5 to 9 .....                     | 721      |
| „ 10 to 12 .....                   | 723      |
| „ 5 to 11 .....                    | 725      |
| „ 13 to 46 .....                   | 727      |
| „ 46 to 49 .....                   | 757      |
| „ 50, 51 .....                     | 764      |
| „ 52, 53 .....                     | 766      |

## ST. JOHN.

|                              |     |
|------------------------------|-----|
| i, 45 .....                  | 207 |
| „ 22, 23, 28 .....           | 223 |
| „ 14, 15, 17, 19 to 34 ..... | 227 |
| „ 35, 36, 29 .....           | 229 |
| „ 43 to 51 .....             | 239 |
| „ 44 .....                   | 352 |
| „ 18 .....                   | 355 |
| „ 3, 14 .....                | 415 |
| „ 51 .....                   | 674 |
| „ 45, 49 to 51 .....         | 735 |
| „ 1 to 4, 14 .....           | 758 |
| ii, 1 .....                  | 207 |

## ST. JOHN CONTINUED.

|                            | Page.    |
|----------------------------|----------|
| ii, 24, 25 .....           | 364      |
| „ 13 to 17 .....           | 483      |
| „ 18 to 21 .....           | 670      |
| „ 19 .....                 | 716      |
| „ 23 to 25 .....           | 749      |
| iii, 35 .....              | 355      |
| „ 1 to 5 .....             | 437      |
| „ 16, 17 .....             | 442      |
| „ 29 .....                 | 593      |
| „ 1, 5 .....               | 716      |
| „ 14 to 21 .....           | 743      |
| „ 27, 35 .....             | 754      |
| v, 44 .....                | 535      |
| „ 42, 43 .....             | 557      |
| „ 24 to 29 .....           | 608, 743 |
| „ 30, 38 to 40 .....       | 656      |
| „ 33, 36, 19 to 29 .....   | 754      |
| vi, 1, 2 .....             | 207      |
| „ 14 .....                 | 346      |
| „ 44 to 46 .....           | 355      |
| „ 41, 42 .....             | 390      |
| „ 1 to 14 .....            | 395      |
| „ 15 .....                 | 396      |
| „ 16 to 20 .....           | 397      |
| „ 21 .....                 | 398      |
| „ 66 to 69 .....           | 399, 415 |
| „ 37 to 40 .....           | 573      |
| „ 70 .....                 | 635      |
| „ 32 to 35, 51 to 58 ..... | 639      |
| „ 14, 15 .....             | 688      |
| „ 38 to 40 .....           | 656      |
| vii, 25, 27, 31 .....      | 482      |
| viii, 39, 40, 56 .....     | 25       |
| „ 38, 39 .....             | 225      |
| „ 50 .....                 | 535      |
| ix, 25 to 41 .....         | 360      |
| „ 31 .....                 | 592      |
| „ 37 .....                 | 712      |
| x, 40 to 42 .....          | 451      |
| „ 27 to 30 .....           | 573      |
| xi, 27 .....               | 415      |
| „ .....                    | 478      |
| „ 55 .....                 | 610      |
| „ 47 to 53 .....           | 613      |
| xii, 23 to 26 .....        | 344      |
| „ 21 .....                 | 352      |
| „ 25 .....                 | 422      |
| „ 1 to 19 .....            | 479      |
| „ 1 to 8 .....             | 616      |
| „ 23 to 33 .....           | 654      |

## ST. JOHN CONTINUED.

|                                | Page.    |
|--------------------------------|----------|
| xiii, 13 to 16 .....           | 338      |
| „ 12 to 17 .....               | 474      |
| „ 2 .....                      | 625      |
| „ 10, 11. 18 to 30 .....       | 630      |
| „ 36 to 38 .....               | 650      |
| „ 36 .....                     | 749      |
| xiv, 13 .....                  | 284      |
| „ 1 to 3. 27 .....             | 660      |
| xv, 8 .....                    | 251      |
| „ 7 .....                      | 284      |
| „ 1 to 6. 8. 16 .....          | 292      |
| „ 20. 18 .....                 | 337      |
| „ 20, 21 .....                 | 338      |
| „ 12. 14, 15 .....             | 374      |
| „ 1 to 8 .....                 | 382      |
| „ 18 to 20. 23. 26, 27 .....   | 559      |
| „ 1, 2. 4, 5. 6. 8. 10 .....   | 598      |
| xvi, 20 to 22 .....            | 244      |
| „ 24 .....                     | 284      |
| „ 1, 2 .....                   | 559      |
| „ 19. 28 to 33 .....           | 647      |
| „ 28 .....                     | 724, 767 |
| „ 28 to 30 .....               | 749      |
| xvii, 9. 15 .....              | 271      |
| „ 1 to 8 .....                 | 355      |
| „ 21 .....                     | 416      |
| „ 12 .....                     | 635      |
| „ 38 to 40 .....               | 692      |
| „ 1, 2 .....                   | 754      |
| xviii, 23 .....                | 262      |
| „ 10, 11 .....                 | 471, 664 |
| „ 1, 2 .....                   | 654      |
| „ 3 to 9 .....                 | 661      |
| „ 12, 13. 19 to 24 .....       | 672      |
| „ 15 to 18. 25 to 27 .....     | 680      |
| „ 28, 29 .....                 | 682      |
| „ 33 to 38 .....               | 686      |
| xix, 25 to 27 .....            | 207      |
| „ 10, 11 .....                 | 511, 689 |
| „ 11 .....                     | 636      |
| „ 6, 7 .....                   | 676      |
| „ 1. 4. 6 to 9. 12 to 16 ..... | 692      |
| „ 1 to 5 .....                 | 695      |
| „ 16, 17 .....                 | 696      |
| „ 17 to 27 .....               | 702      |
| „ 28 to 30 .....               | 708      |
| „ 30 .....                     | 709      |
| „ 31 to 37 .....               | 713      |
| „ 38 to 42 .....               | 716      |
| xx, 22, 23 .....               | 418      |

## ST. JOHN CONTINUED.

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| xx, 21 to 23 .....       | P |
| „ 23 .....               |   |
| „ 1, 2 .....             |   |
| „ 1 to 18 .....          |   |
| „ 19, 20. 24 to 31 ..... |   |
| „ 17 .....               |   |
| xxi, 20. 24 .....        |   |
| „ 12, 13 .....           |   |
| „ 1 to 23 .....          |   |
| „ 15 to 17 .....         |   |
| „ 25 .....               |   |

## THE ACTS.

|                        |        |
|------------------------|--------|
| i, 13, 14 .....        | 3      |
| „ 6, 7 .....           | 5      |
| „ 9 to 11 .....        | 600, 7 |
| „ 15 to 17. 20 .....   | 6      |
| „ 15 to 19 .....       | 6      |
| „ 1 to 8 .....         | 75     |
| „ 1, 2. 9 to 11 .....  | 76     |
| ii, 44 to 46 .....     | 46     |
| „ 8 to 12 .....        | 50     |
| „ 22 to 36 .....       | 52     |
| „ 16 to 21 .....       | 57     |
| „ 36 .....             | 75     |
| „ 37 to 39 .....       | 75     |
| „ 37. 41, 42 .....     | 76     |
| „ 32 to 36. 4 .....    | 76     |
| iii, 25. 13, &c. ....  | 2      |
| „ 22, 23 .....         | 42     |
| „ 17 to 19 .....       | 61     |
| „ 12 to 15 .....       | 69     |
| iv, 6, 7. 15. 21 ..... | 48     |
| „ 1 to 3 .....         | 55     |
| „ 1 to 26 .....        | 61     |
| v, 41, 42 .....        | 24     |
| „ 40, 41 .....         | 33     |
| „ 40 .....             | 54     |
| „ 28 .....             | 69     |
| „ 5. 10 .....          | 70     |
| vi, 5 .....            | 33     |
| „ 8 to 15 .....        | 67     |
| vii, 17. 31, 32 .....  | 21     |
| „ 51, 52 .....         | 24     |
| „ 60 .....             | 26     |
| „ 58, 59 .....         | 33     |
| „ 27 .....             | 45     |
| „ 51, &c. ....         | 49     |
| „ 32 .....             | 51     |
| „ 49 .....             | 54     |

## THE ACTS CONTINUED.

|                        | Page.    |
|------------------------|----------|
| vii, 51 to 53 .....    | 548      |
| „ 55 to 60 .....       | 675      |
| „ 54 to 56 .....       | 766      |
| viii, 39 .....         | 230      |
| „ 18 to 23 .....       | 330      |
| „ 37 .....             | 399, 415 |
| ix, 1. 6 .....         | 607      |
| x, 45 .....            | 300      |
| „ 41 .....             | 645      |
| „ 28 .....             | 683      |
| „ 36 to 41 .....       | 738      |
| xi, 18 .....           | 300      |
| „ 2, 3 .....           | 683      |
| xii, 1, 2 .....        | 334      |
| „ 1 to 4 .....         | 560      |
| „ 1 to 6 .....         | 749      |
| xiii, 26 .....         | 26       |
| „ 16 to 24 .....       | 31       |
| „ 1 to 3 .....         | 317, 546 |
| „ 43, 45, 46 .....     | 329      |
| „ 50, 51 .....         | 332      |
| „ 46, 47 .....         | 408      |
| xiv, 27 .....          | 300      |
| „ 21 to 23 .....       | 317      |
| „ 22 .....             | 421      |
| xv, 7 to 10 .....      | 533      |
| xvi, 14, 15 .....      | 739      |
| xvii, 1, 2 .....       | 635      |
| „ 3, 4 .....           | 731      |
| xviii, 6 .....         | 333      |
| „ 5, 6 .....           | 500      |
| xix, 3, 4, 18 .....    | 224      |
| „ 11, 12 .....         | 400      |
| xx, 34 .....           | 278      |
| „ 28 to 31 .....       | 562      |
| „ 28 .....             | 586      |
| „ 17, 27 to 29 .....   | 747      |
| xxi, 14 .....          | 269      |
| xxiii, 6 to 8 .....    | 514      |
| „ 8 .....              | 516      |
| xxvi, 21 to 23 .....   | 635      |
| xxviii, 23 to 27 ..... | 378      |

## ROMANS.

|                                          |          |
|------------------------------------------|----------|
| i, 3, 4 .....                            | 399      |
| ii, 1 to 3 .....                         | 282      |
| „ 13, 28, 29 .....                       | 293, 407 |
| „ 2, 6 to 16 .....                       | 424      |
| „ 2, 6 to 11 .....                       | 532      |
| „ 12, 13, 17 to 21, 23, 24, 28, 29 ..... | 532      |

## ROMANS CONTINUED.

|                                    | Page.    |
|------------------------------------|----------|
| ii, 5 to 12, 16 .....              | 608      |
| „ 28, 29 .....                     | 762      |
| iii, 20 to 26, 31 .....            | 253      |
| iv, 11 .....                       | 5        |
| „ 18 .....                         | 8        |
| „ 1 to 3, 9 to 25 .....            | 26       |
| „ 11, 13 to 15 .....               | 226      |
| v, 8, 9 .....                      | 225      |
| „ 3, 4, 2 .....                    | 250      |
| „ 1, 8 to 12, 18 to 21, 6 .....    | 642      |
| vi, 3, 4 .....                     | 763      |
| vii, 1 to 6 .....                  | 259      |
| „ 23 .....                         | 285      |
| „ 14, &c. .....                    | 286      |
| „ 14 to 25 .....                   | 657      |
| viii, 13 .....                     | 258      |
| „ 1 to 4 .....                     | 287      |
| „ 35, 37, 1 to 4 .....             | 286      |
| „ 17 .....                         | 472      |
| „ 28 to 32 .....                   | 573      |
| „ 14, 16, 17 .....                 | 603      |
| „ 1 to 6 .....                     | 657      |
| „ 28, 29 .....                     | 724      |
| „ 34 .....                         | 768      |
| ix, 31, 32 .....                   | 253      |
| „ 20, 21 .....                     | 468      |
| „ 30 to 33 .....                   | 502      |
| x, 4 .....                         | 252      |
| „ 4, 3 .....                       | 253      |
| „ 9 to 11 .....                    | 341      |
| „ 18 .....                         | 565      |
| „ 4, 3, 12, 13, 14 to 18, 10 ..... | 760      |
| xii, 4 to 16 .....                 | 287      |
| „ 1 to 8 .....                     | 595      |
| xiii, 17 to 21 .....               | 262      |
| „ 20, 21 .....                     | 265      |
| „ 9 .....                          | 266      |
| „ 8 .....                          | 267      |
| „ 9, 10 .....                      | 460      |
| „ 1 to 7 .....                     | 510      |
| „ 8 to 10 .....                    | 526      |
| xiv, 4, 10 .....                   | 282      |
| „ 17, 16 .....                     | 365      |
| „ 12 .....                         | 451      |
| „ 9, 10 .....                      | 674      |
| „ 9 .....                          | 754      |
| xv, 8, 12, 15 to 21 .....          | 301      |
| xvi, 17, 18 .....                  | 290, 444 |
| „ 19, 20 .....                     | 333      |
| „ 25, 26 .....                     | 385      |

## 1st CORINTHIANS.

|                            | Page.              |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| i, 18 to 31                | 354                |
| „ 27 to 29                 | 405                |
| „ 22 to 24                 | 412                |
| „ 4, 5, 7 to 9             | 760                |
| „ 17, 18                   | 761                |
| ii, 14                     | 377                |
| „ 7, 8, 12 to 14           | 385                |
| „ 7, 10                    | 417                |
| „ 9, 10                    | 604                |
| „                          | 761                |
| iii, 11, 13                | 295                |
| „ 1 to 11                  | 761                |
| iv, 12, 13                 | 265                |
| „ 12                       | 278                |
| „ 3 to 5                   | 282                |
| „ 5                        | 339, 752           |
| „ 20                       | 413                |
| „ 1, 2                     | 586                |
| v, 6 to 8                  | 413                |
| „ 25 to 27, 29 to 32       | 455                |
| vi, 7                      | 262                |
| „ 15, 13, 16 to 20         | 454                |
| „ 2                        | 464                |
| „ 11                       | 494                |
| vii, 3, 10, 11             | 259                |
| „ 2, 3, 7 to 16            | 454                |
| „ 19                       | 762                |
| ix, 27                     | 258                |
| „ 1, 4, 7 to 11, 13, 14    | 331                |
| „ 19 to 29                 | 640                |
| x, 12                      | 271                |
| „ 13                       | 372                |
| „ 14, 16, 17, 21           | 640                |
| xi, 26                     | 752                |
| xii, 13                    | 228                |
| „ 4, 7                     | 434                |
| „ 4 to 11                  | 596                |
| xiii, 2                    | 294, 434, 487, 739 |
| xiv, 31                    | 48                 |
| „ 20                       | 333                |
| xv, 20 to 25               | 529                |
| „ 51, 52                   | 577                |
| „ 1 to 3, 4                | 635                |
| „ 44, 45, 47 to 58, 21, 22 | 710                |
| „ 3 to 8                   | 737                |
| xvi, 13, 14                | 593                |

## 2nd CORINTHIANS.

|          |     |
|----------|-----|
| i, 7     | 244 |
| „ 23, 24 | 535 |

## 2nd CORINTHIANS CONTINUED.

|            | Page.    |
|------------|----------|
| iv, 16, 17 | 26       |
| „ 3, 4     | 37       |
| „ 5        | 535      |
| v, 10      | 330, 601 |
| „ 1 to 3   | 507      |
| „ 7        | 742      |

## GALATIANS.

|                      |          |
|----------------------|----------|
| i, 10                | 277, 278 |
| „ 15, 16             | 418      |
| „ 11, 12             | 635      |
| ii, 1 to 8           | 474      |
| iii                  | 27       |
| „ 24                 | 253      |
| iv, 1 to 7, 21 to 31 | 28       |
| v, 1 to 6            | 28       |
| „ 1, 13, 14          | 460      |
| „ 13, 16, 22         | 526      |
| vi, 12, 13           | 533      |
| „ 15                 | 762      |

## EPHESIANS.

|                    |          |
|--------------------|----------|
| i, 9, 10           | 301      |
| „ 15 to 23         | 724      |
| „ 16 to 23         | 754      |
| „ 20 to 23         | 767      |
| ii, 10 to 13       | 29       |
| „ 8, 19 to 22      | 417      |
| „ 1 to 6           | 494      |
| „ 19, 22           | 501      |
| iii, 1 to 9        | 301      |
| „ 6 to 11          | 385      |
| iv, 31, 32         | 273      |
| „ 22 to 24         | 507      |
| „ 4 to 8, 11 to 13 | 586      |
| „ 3 to 10          | 767      |
| v, 1               | 265      |
| „ 6                | 290, 556 |
| „ 15               | 333      |
| „ 22 to 33         | 454      |
| vi, 18             | 657      |

## PHILIPPIANS.

|                   |     |
|-------------------|-----|
| ii, 15, 16        | 251 |
| „ 14 to 16        | 333 |
| „ 5 to 8          | 655 |
| „ 6 to 11         | 754 |
| iii, 7, 8         | 387 |
| iv, 6, 11, 12, 19 | 278 |
| „ 13              | 399 |

## COLOSSIANS.

|                 |               |
|-----------------|---------------|
|                 | Page.         |
| .....           | 229           |
| .....           | 265           |
| .....           | 385           |
| 9 to 23         | 566           |
| to 23, 25 to 29 | 761           |
| .....           | 290, 401, 556 |
| 1. 4. 9         | 761           |
| .....           | 763           |
| .....           | 258           |
| .....           | 273, 447      |
| 1 to 17         | 507           |
| .....           | 767           |
| .....           | 265           |

## THESSALONIANS.

|          |          |
|----------|----------|
| 0        | 225      |
| .....    | 249, 421 |
| .....    | 278      |
| .....    | 499      |
| .....    | 547      |
| .....    | 421      |
| 16 to 18 | 577      |
| .....    | 580      |
| .....    | 600      |
| .....    | 675      |
| .....    | 262      |
| .....    | 555      |
| .....    | 577      |
| .....    | 580      |

## THESSALONIANS.

|       |     |
|-------|-----|
| ..... | 600 |
| ..... | 386 |
| to 10 | 556 |
| ..... | 572 |
| ..... | 278 |
| ..... | 326 |
| 5     | 444 |

## 1st TIMOTHY.

|       |     |
|-------|-----|
| ..... | 315 |
| ..... | 527 |
| ..... | 566 |
| ..... | 474 |
| ..... | 768 |
| ..... | 562 |
| ..... | 275 |
| ..... | 281 |
| ..... | 381 |
| 21    | 463 |
| ..... | 687 |

## 2nd TIMOTHY.

|                 |       |
|-----------------|-------|
|                 | Page. |
| i, 7 to 15      | 561   |
| „ 16            | 606   |
| ii, 11, 12      | 247   |
| „ 12            | 341   |
| „ 19            | 573   |
| iii, 16, 17     | 30    |
| „ 1 to 5. 8. 13 | 290   |
| „ 12            | 421   |
| „ 1 to 7        | 539   |
| iv, 3, 4        | 290   |
| „ 5             | 539   |
| „ 10. 14. 16    | 562   |

## TITUS.

|              |     |
|--------------|-----|
| i, 13, 14    | 402 |
| „ 15, 16     | 403 |
| „ 10, 11, 16 | 539 |
| ii, 11 to 14 | 474 |
| iii, 1, 2    | 511 |
| „ 3 to 7     | 763 |

## HEBREWS.

|                  |               |
|------------------|---------------|
| i, 14            | 234, 440      |
| „                | 415           |
| „ 1 to 4         | 499, 755, 767 |
| „ 1 to 5. 13, 14 | 529           |
| ii, 16           | 29            |
| „ 16, 17         | 374           |
| „                | 415           |
| „ 9              | 425           |
| „ 1 to 3         | 428           |
| „ 2              | 499           |
| „ 3              | 500           |
| „ 1 to 5         | 529           |
| „ 9 to 12        | 724           |
| „ 10. 18         | 755           |
| iii, 1 to 6      | 416           |
| „ 6. 12 to 14    | 565           |
| „ 1, 2           | 586           |
| iv, 9 to 11      | 440           |
| „ 14             | 768           |
| v, 20            | 314           |
| „ 7 to 9         | 655           |
| „ 12             | 763           |
| vi, 10           | 345, 606      |
| „ 4 to 6         | 367, 373      |
| „ 1, 2           | 763           |
| vii, 1 to 4      | 8             |
| „ 19 to 23       | 642           |
| „ 26             | 768           |



## HEBREWS CONTINUED.

|                      | Page.    |
|----------------------|----------|
| viii, 6 to 8. 13     | 643      |
| „ 1                  | 768      |
| ix, 11 to 14         | 475      |
| „ 11 to 15. 22 to 28 | 643      |
| „ 24                 | 768      |
| x, 26, 27            | 295, 373 |
| „ 26. 29. 31. 38     | 367      |
| „ 1 to 13            | 530      |
| „ 1 to 31. 35 to 37  | 644      |
| „ 22 to 24           | 763      |
| „ 12, 13             | 768      |
| xi, 13               | 379      |
| „ 32. 35 to 38       | 499      |
| „ 13. 16             | 604      |
| xii, 1, 2            | 597, 768 |
| xiii, 2              | 10       |
| „ 5. 16              | 275      |
| „ 1, 2               | 605      |
| „ 11 to 15           | 697      |
| „ 9                  | 747      |

## ST. JAMES.

|                 |          |
|-----------------|----------|
| i, 3, 4         | 265      |
| „ 2 to 4        | 271      |
| „ 5 to 8        | 284      |
| „ 22 to 27      | 293      |
| „ 6             | 399      |
| „ 1 to 8        | 487      |
| „ 27            | 605      |
| „ 2 to 4        | 656      |
| ii, 10          | 253      |
| „ 13            | 273, 451 |
| „ 8             | 460      |
| „ 8. 14 to 16   | 527      |
| iii, 1          | 535      |
| iv, 4. 7. 8. 12 | 277      |
| „ 13 to 15      | 281      |
| „ 11, 12        | 282      |
| „ 5 to 7. 10    | 437      |
| „ 6. 10         | 538      |
| „ 13 to 17      | 606      |
| v, 12           | 260      |
| „ 16            | 267      |
| „ 1, 2, 3. 5    | 275      |
| „ 19, 20        | 444      |
| „ 7, 8. 19      | 579      |

## 1st ST. PETER.

|              |          |
|--------------|----------|
| i, 15        | 265      |
| „ 9 to 11    | 379, 731 |
| „ 15. 22, 23 | 382      |

## 1st ST. PETER CONTINUED.

|                  | Page.    |
|------------------|----------|
| i, 3 to 9        | 603      |
| „ 2 to 9         | 742      |
| ii, 7. 9. 12     | 252      |
| „ 19 to 23       | 265      |
| „ 21. 24         | 304      |
| „ 25             | 329, 747 |
| „ 5              | 416      |
| „ 1 to 3         | 436      |
| „ 1 to 8         | 501      |
| „ 13 to 17       | 511      |
| iii, 15 to 17    | 248      |
| „ 8 to 18        | 262      |
| „ 13 to 15       | 339      |
| „ 1, 2           | 444      |
| „ 20, 21         | 583, 763 |
| „ 9              | 604      |
| „ 22             | 755      |
| „ 18 to 22       | 768      |
| iv, 12 to 14     | 248      |
| „ 12 to 19       | 560      |
| „ 7              | 658      |
| v, 7             | 278      |
| „ 8, 9           | 372      |
| „ 1 to 3. 5, 6   | 473      |
| „ 1 to 4         | 536      |
| „ 5, 6           | 538      |
| „ 8 to 10        | 593      |
| „ 1 to 4. 5 to 9 | 748      |
| „ 10             | 749      |

## 2nd ST. PETER.

|                              |          |
|------------------------------|----------|
| i, 16, 17                    | 229      |
| „ 16 to 18                   | 427      |
| ii, 9                        | 271      |
| „ 1 to 3. 13 to 15. 17 to 19 | 290      |
| „ 1, 2                       | 562      |
| „ 5                          | 583      |
| iii, 9                       | 316      |
| „ 1 to 14                    | 581, 750 |

## 1st ST. JOHN.

|                          |          |
|--------------------------|----------|
| i, 16                    | 368      |
| ii, 15 to 17             | 277      |
| „ 17                     | 374      |
| „ 14                     | 380      |
| iii, 1 to 3              | 247, 741 |
| „ 15. 14                 | 255      |
| „ 1. 3. 6. 9. 10. 13, 14 | 277      |
| „ 21, 22                 | 285      |
| „ 18 to 24               | 487      |
| „ 2, 3                   | 523      |

## ST. JOHN CONTINUED.

|          | Page.    |
|----------|----------|
| 2 .....  | 550      |
| .....    | 290      |
| .....    | 415      |
| .....    | 556      |
| .....    | 572      |
| .....    | 278      |
| .....    | 285      |
| 15 ..... | 445      |
| .....    | 471      |
| 15 ..... | 488      |
| .....    | 640, 713 |

## 2nd ST. JOHN.

|       |     |
|-------|-----|
| ..... | 444 |
|-------|-----|

## 3rd ST. JOHN.

|       |     |
|-------|-----|
| ..... | 605 |
|-------|-----|

## ST. JUDE.

|          |     |
|----------|-----|
| .....    | 424 |
| .....    | 439 |
| 15 ..... | 601 |

## REVELATIONS.

|                 |          |
|-----------------|----------|
| .....           | 576, 601 |
| 7 .....         | 718      |
| .....           | 718      |
| 12 to 19 .....  | 761      |
| .....           | 768      |
| .....           | 364      |
| .....           | 425      |
| to 17. 26 ..... | 260      |
| .....           | 762      |
| 12 .....        | 271      |
| .....           | 341      |
| .....           | 508      |
| 15 .....        | 598      |
| 2 .....         | 752      |
| 13 .....        | 665      |
| 3 .....         | 576      |
| 17 .....        | 599      |

## REVELATIONS CONTINUED.

|                             | Page.    |
|-----------------------------|----------|
| „ 15 to 17 .....            | 701      |
| xii, 10, 11 .....           | 366      |
| „ 9 .....                   | 386      |
| xiii, 11 to 14. 9, 10 ..... | 573      |
| „ 4 .....                   | 664      |
| xiv, 14 to 19 .....         | 386      |
| xvi, 15 .....               | 508, 584 |
| xvii, 14 .....              | 755      |
| xix, 20 .....               | 387      |
| „ 6 to 9 .....              | 506      |
| „ 6, 7 .....                | 588      |
| xx, 10 .....                | 387      |
| „ 10. 12 to 15 .....        | 599      |
| „ 11, 12 .....              | 601      |
| xxi, 4. 3 .....             | 244      |
| „ 8 .....                   | 599      |
| „ 6 to 8 .....              | 604      |
| xxii, 12, 13 .....          | 425      |
| „ 17 .....                  | 506      |
| „ 14 .....                  | 599      |
| „ 12 to 14. 17. 20 .....    | 752      |

## APOCRYPHA.—ECCLESIASTICUS.

|                             |     |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| xix, 7, 8. 13. 15. 17 ..... | 443 |
| „ 21 .....                  | 491 |
| xxviii, 1 to 7 .....        | 273 |
| xxix, 1, 2. 7. 9 .....      | 264 |
| „ 11 to 13 .....            | 276 |
| xlvi, 1 to 11 .....         | 128 |
| li, 10 .....                | 528 |

## WISDOM.

|                           |     |
|---------------------------|-----|
| ii, 1. 10. 12 to 14 ..... | 705 |
| iii, 1 to 10 .....        | 705 |

## TOBIT.

|                   |     |
|-------------------|-----|
| iv, 7 to 11 ..... | 264 |
|-------------------|-----|

## 2nd ESDRAS.

|                      |     |
|----------------------|-----|
| i, 4. 22 to 40 ..... | 551 |
|----------------------|-----|

## CORRECTIONS AND ALTERATIONS.

The Fourth Chapter of The GOSPEL by St. John has been unintentionally omitted in the quotations. The study of it by the Readers hereof, may draw forth from suitable and, perhaps, corresponding reflections on our SAVIOUR'S Assertion of MESSIAHSHIP, in His Converse with the Woman at the well of Samaria; and the of His Omnipotence in the Healing, by the mere utterance of His Word, of the sick; the Ruler, at the distance of Cana in Galilee from Capernaum.

Some capital letters have been omitted, and some misplaced, and occasionally might have been improved; but for these oversights, in a work of this extent, allow will, in candour, be made.

This marginal mark  $\triangle$  may assist in a divisional reading in a Family, to prevent inconvenient detention of Servants; and the Text may be repeated on renewing reading of the extended observations.

The line calculated from the top or bottom of the page, distinguished by t or b.  
Pa. line.  
6 1 t. proceeds.  
7 6 b. with *after* went.  
9 16 t. *strike out* and *after* Man  
31 15 b. naughtiness *for* haughtiness.  
46 2 t. reminds *for* admonishes.  
" 18 t. or pride *for* and pride.  
53 20 b. another *for* Another.  
65 2 t. persuasion.  
" 25 t. add *will before* weep.  
69 17 t. add xxv *after* 1 Sam.  
79 11 b. Achish *for* the latter.  
90 28 b. *strike out* one made.  
97 19 b. add first *after* went.  
" 18 b. add 1 Chron. xi, 8. 6.  
112 5 & GOD'S *for* His.  
204 3 b. add *of before* David.  
217 3 t. Him *for* him.  
233 20 b. He *for* he.  
237 5 t. noticed *for* mentioned.  
251 22 t. exhorts.  
262 13 t. again.  
264 16 t. Ecclesi *for* Eccles.  
265 1 t. his.  
266 22 t. workings.  
269 23 b. done.  
270 7 b. bearing in mind.  
277 29 b. set.  
278 13 t. seek *for* such.  
" 8 b. *substitute* this *for* in such.  
" 5 b. *insert* may *we before* learn.  
285 5 b. *for*; *after* CHRIST.  
288 18 b. however *for* though.  
294 11 t. Know.  
297 4 b. dead *for* renewed.  
" 3 b. renewed *for* dead.  
301 2 b. are *for* is.

Pa. line.  
303 19 t. *strike out*, *after* Light.  
303 12 b. has *for* have.  
308 12 t. through *for* though.  
310 21 t. Influence *for* Power.  
344 2 t. Suffering.  
349 32 t. *strike out* one of.  
424 11 b. *strike out* the brackets.  
442 27 b. through *for* and.  
452 8 b. Required.  
456 4 t. alluded *to for* and which.  
470 10 t. the *for* His.  
" 11 t. add *of after* People.  
478 2 t. where *for* were.  
" 26 b. *strike out*, *after* LORD.  
" 12 b., *after* contemplate.  
481 21 b. subordination *for* subordination.  
488 14 t. Hear.  
494 2 t. Son *for* SON.  
495 10 b. beautiful and many, *for* and many beautiful.  
500 7 t. Word.  
501 10 t. This.  
527 8 b. withdrew.  
528 15 b. Ecclesi *for* Eccles.  
530 11 t. *Disse. Lo. for do*  
535 10 t., *after* which.  
537 14 t., *after* this.  
541 3 b. Invisible.  
542 25 b. power *for* nature.  
544 5 b. be deemed *for* beamed.  
549 26 b.; *after* eyes.  
" 10 b. *Power. Telle.*  
554 7 b. thitherto *for* hitherto.  
563 25 b. *strike out* is apt to view, and add *after* manners, is apt to be viewed.  
" 10 b., *after* Death.

Pa. line.  
568 2 t. go *for* do.  
570 17 b. *strike out* one of.  
571 13 b. saith.  
588 9 t. the *before* thought.  
" 10 t.: *after* It-like.  
589 10 b. conversation.  
596 14 b. or steal.  
599 5 b. minister.  
602 21 b. Deliver.  
608 5 b. *join the* paragraphs  
609 4 t. Livcs.  
" 9 t.; *after* away.  
" 14 t. sufferings.  
" 17 t. Example *for* Exem;  
" 6 b. consider *for* conten  
611 1 b. Kind.  
613 12 t. worldly.  
614 7 t. from *for* with.  
620 20 t. Honour.  
" 13 t. *justly* *for* awfully.  
623 23 t. was *for* were.  
625 10 t.; *after* Glory.  
631 11 b. Perpetrator.  
659 12 b. *strike out* and *before*  
" 1 b. Both.  
660 24 b. Illustrate.  
664 22 b. his.  
671 11 t. add St. Luke *before*  
677 11 b. Almighty.  
684 11 b. proscribed *for* pro;  
689 24 t. Silence.  
691 5 t. Hand Writing.  
713 8 b. *after* in that.  
740 1 b. Will.  
749 23 b. *to for* so.  
757 26 t. Superadding.  
15.

# IN THOUGHTS ON THE GOSPEL, FIRST EDITION,

## SUPPLEMENTAL CORRECTIONS,

MOSTLY as to Stops, and to Capital Letters, for uniformity's sake, consistently with the Writer's intention, where applicable upon his principle—As also with some few variations in the original Work.

All the names of The DEITY to be in full Capital Letters. Where the genitive case occurs—as in GOD's Word, The LORD's Commands, and such like—the final s should be *small*, being only the last letter of *His*, so abbreviated.

Initial Capitals for the Nature, Attributes, Actions, Promises, Threatenings, and the Like, of JEHOVAH, or of The HEAVENLY FATHER, of CHRIST JESUS, or of The HOLY GHOST.

The Epithets, Adjectives, Relatives, Pronouns, Adverbs, and Articles, so associated, also to have initial Capitals.

A Family Reader may considerably make these alterations, where occurring in the passage intended to be used, before entering on the exercise; or at least bear the Writer's intention in mind during the connected Service.

Page, Line, reckoned from the top, marked t.; that from the bottom, by b.

Preface.. dele, after Peace; † after Reconciliation.

5 1 t. SON; SON.

„ 12 t. Thee.

„ 14 t. All.

„ 2 b. SON.

„ 1 b. SON.

6 5 t. Others.

„ 17 t. Wife.

7 1 b., after received.

8 9 t., after Adopted.

„ 13 t.; after all.

„ 16 t., after life.

„ 19 t. vary marginal Δ to opposite 20th line.

„ 4 b. Intercessory.

9 18 b. self before same.

10 12 b., after Him.

„ 6 b. Place, for City.

11 26 b. Do, for Destroy.

„ 19 b. Do, for Destroy.

„ 4 b., after found.

12 14 t. dele, after frailty.

„ 26 b. GOD.

„ 19 b. Did.

„ 4 b.; after mocking.

13 20 t., after that—Provision.

14 14 t.; after behalf.

„ 17 t., after it.

„ 21 t., after said.

„ 25 t. Phichol.

15 12 b., after sin.

17 3 b. Machpelah.

18 17 t. † to 19 after Gen. xxiii.

„ 21 b. dele, after faithfulness.

19 5 t. That.

„ 12 t. Things.

„ 27 t. Favour.

„ 6 b., after ~~and~~ fear, for freed

20 25 b. that, for who.

„ 3 b. dele, after Master.

21 10 b. Prosper.

22 17 t. Men.

„ 26 t. Sister.

„ 15 b. † after Incident.

23 12 t., after Steward.

„ 13 t. Had.

„ 28 t., after invoked.

„ 7 b. to, for of.

24 9 t. Father for Founder—the after In.

„ 10 t., after Faithful.

„ 14 t. Machpelah.

25 1 t. Israel, for Jacob.

„ 12 t. than after found.

„ 18 t. All Things That.

„ 19 t. All.

„ 19 b. Thrust.

„ 15 b., after was.

„ 1 b. GOD.

26 2 t. dele, after JESUS and after Apostle.

Pa. line.

26 8 t., after Paul.

„ 11 b., after not.

27 7 t. † after Truth.

„ 12 t. doeth.

„ 20 b. The SPIRIT.

„ 12 b. Many.

„ 11 b. as before of ONE.

„ 4 b., after Come.

28 28 b.; after Promise.

„ 25 b. xvi. for xiv.

„ 19 b., after he.

„ 12 b., after Testimony—dele

„ before was.

29 5 t., after that.

„ 7 t. a before Debtor.

„ 19 t., after That.

30 2 t. Life, for one.

„ 4 t. Arose after BRANCH.

„ 5 t., after FRUIT—dele is.

„ 16 t. chapter.

„ 21 t. † after LORD.

„ 6 b., after ruddy.

„ 2 b. xvi., for xiii.

31 9 b. stature.

„ 7 t. on, for upon.

32 2 t. These.

„ 6 t., after not and Seeth.

„ 8 t. Him.

„ 11 b., after Servants.

33 18 t. would, for will—This

„ were, for be.

„ 19 t. past offenses, for guilt.

„ 21 t. would for shall.

„ 22 t. have been for be.

„ 23 t. add after troubling, if

„ Saul had gone and sinned

„ no more.

„ 25 b. then before character.

„ 19 b. dele, after GOD.

34 5 t. on, for upon.

„ 16 b. to before kill.

„ 13 b. dele, after Man.

35 18 t. heard.

36 16 t. thou come for they came.

„ 22 t. Goliath.

„ 28 t. valiant for valiantly.

„ 15 b., after affection.

37 8 t., after but.

„ 23 t., after side.

„ 20 b. Fulness.

„ 12 b. after LORD.

„ 6 b. Pharisaical.

„ 2 b. Wise—Weak.

„ 1 b. Mighty.

38 2 t.; after shield.

„ 5 t., after Him.

„ 21 t. Battle.

„ 25 b., after thus.

„ 23 b. Lesson.

„ 18 b. dele Δ—, after passion.

„ 3 b. add in margin Δ.

39 16 t. principles for propensity.

40 13 t. Office.

„ 16 t.; after ought.

5 R

Pa. line.

40 21 b. SPIRIT.

„ 6 b. in after heart.

41 8 t. thus, for he.

„ 21 t. leads—dele, after us

„ and GOD.

„ 24 t. exhibits.

„ 2 b. Merab.

42 4 t. Merab.

„ 11 t. Merab's.

„ 23 b., after One.

„ 14 b. dele, after called.

43 6 b. Throne.

„ 3 b. Crown.

44 20 t. Former, for Latter.

„ 29 t. Was.

45 1 t., after it.

„ 6 t. Any.

„ 22 b., after it.

46 6 t. Wherefore.

„ 26 b.; after complete.

47 1 t. under Grace — after

„ which—dele entirely.

„ 4 t. Crown.

48 6 t. † after GOD.

„ 18 t. after xix. dele 20, dele

„ 24, and add 20 to 24.

49 10 b., after commission.

50 22 b. That—Which.

51 23 b. Such—Service.

52 13 t. † before 13.

„ 28 t. † after LORD and

„ LORD.

53 6 t. Throne.

„ 18 t. at once pours, for and

„ first pouring.

„ 20 b. wound our heart's peace,

„ for eat our own flesh.

„ 4 b.; after javelin.

55 2 b. † after free.

56 24 b., after Thousands.

57 17 t. Warrior.

„ 13 b. Religion.

58 5 t. dele, after him.

„ 14 t. Way.

60 16 t. Spiritual.

„ 22 t. SPIRITUAL.

„ 20 t. so for thus.

61 7 t., after remembrance.

„ 24 b. Said.

„ 14 b. The Same.

„ 3 b. Said

63 18 b. dele, after Gracious—

„ Friendly.

64 1 t. read Father persecuting.

„ 3 t. Sure.

„ 21 t., before hoping and after

„ Mercy.

65 2 b. That.

66 18 b. Be.

68 22 t. Efforts.

69 27 b. it after over.

„ 25 b. dele, after duty and

„ gratitude.

70 12 t. Battles.

Pa. Hne.  
 70 17 t. That.  
 71 13 b. Followers.  
 71 11 b. That.  
 73 19 b. That.  
 74 29 t. Efficacy.  
 75 9 b. The SON.  
 75 8 b. The SON.  
 75 1 t.; after Enemies.  
 75 25 b. What — The SPI-  
 RITUAL.  
 76 7 b. Ingratiates.  
 76 1 b. Amalekites.  
 76 20 t. our.  
 76 24 t., after David.  
 77 16 t. for Himself, instead of to  
 him.  
 78 18 b. dele, after David.  
 78 15 b. after thoughts.  
 78 13 t. Him.  
 81 12 t. Death—Appointed.  
 81 26 t., before when and after  
 eaten.  
 81 21 b. GOD.  
 81 10 b., after David.  
 81 8 b., before in.  
 82 18 t. aught.  
 83 17 t. That.  
 83 19 t., after those—dele, after  
 him.  
 84 25 t.; after Heaven.  
 85 11 t. GOD.  
 85 24 b. Judged.  
 86 16 b. SPIRITUAL.  
 86 10 b. Written.  
 86 23 t. That.  
 87 17 b. Jabesh-Gilead.  
 88 3 t. Act.  
 88 5 t., after Sake.  
 88 10 t. he before made.  
 88 20 t. His.  
 90 3 t. dele, after Saul.  
 91 13 t. dele for before an.  
 91 1 b. for—instead of—to be-  
 fore his.  
 92 3 t.; after Ish-bosheth—  
 after otherwise.  
 93 2 b. Criminal.  
 94 5 t. dele, after innocency  
 and motive.  
 94 28 b. Those.  
 94 26 b.; after Protection.  
 94 8 b., after Baanah.  
 95 6 t., after him.  
 95 7 t., after more.  
 95 8 t., after bed—shall.  
 95 14 t. Such—dele, after GOD.  
 95 15 b. SPIRITUAL DAVID.  
 95 14 b., after Procure and  
 All.  
 96 3 t. unto, for to.  
 96 2 b., after thinking.  
 97 6 t. Was.  
 97 12 t. — after History.  
 97 16 t., after arose.  
 97 22, 23 t. The Love—Working.  
 97 20 b. The Helper.  
 97 13 b., after respect.  
 98 6 b. This.  
 98 6 t. His.  
 98 7 t., after Occurrences.  
 98 11 t. His.  
 98 19 b., after Population.  
 98 18 b. Aim.  
 98 17 b., after general—dele,  
 after hearts.  
 99 14, 13 b. join the paragraphs.  
 99 20 b. Due.  
 99 13 b. raise Δ one line.  
 100 12, 11 b. join the paragraphs.  
 100 16 b., after manifest.  
 100 12 b., after calls.  
 100 11 b., after Kingdom.  
 100 10 b. Service.  
 100 9 b. That.  
 100 7 b. This—Treasure.  
 101 29 b. Account.

Pa. Hne.  
 101 26 b. Spiritualised.  
 102 3 t. Which—, after Him.  
 102 8 t. This.  
 103 5 b. unto, for to.  
 103 4 b. Those.  
 104 22 b. That.  
 104 6 b. The Spiritual.  
 105 11 t., after Light.  
 105 12 t. Whatever.  
 105 24, 25 b. join the paragraphs.  
 105 24 b. Place.  
 105 20 b. Place.  
 106 7 b. the before due.  
 106 5 b. Saying.  
 106 1 b. Saying.  
 107 11 t., after Nations.  
 107 15 b. Well-Pleasing.  
 107 13 b. Due.  
 108 6 t. happily, for haply.  
 108 24 t., after Reserved.  
 108 21 b., after continually.  
 108 15 b. The Highest.  
 108 7 b. All.  
 109 5 t. That.  
 109 29 b. dele, after Wisdom.  
 109 25 b. SPIRITUAL.  
 109 23 b. That.  
 109 17 b. Gather.  
 110 6 t. Grace.  
 110 17 t. dele, after LORD.  
 110 16 b. happily, for haply.  
 110 12 b. the, for our.  
 111 11 t. These.  
 111 8 b. SAVIOUR.  
 111 2 b. With.  
 112 19 t. With before thee.  
 112 20 t. That.  
 112 6 b. This.  
 112 5 b. Fulness—dele His.  
 112 4 b. add GOD'S — Terres-  
 trial.  
 113 1 t. Made.  
 113 5 t. The SAVIOUR.  
 113 10 t. Me.  
 113 14 t. Thus.  
 113 23 t. Tell.  
 113 23 b. These—This.  
 113 4 b. thy.  
 114 24 b. saying.  
 114 1 b., after that.  
 115 21 t., after LORD.  
 116 9 b., after Salvation.  
 117 25 b. kindness.  
 118 13 t. kindness.  
 119 8 b. Where.  
 120 11 t. Δ changed to this line—  
 join the paragraph with  
 line 12.  
 120 12 t. dele Δ.  
 121 11 t. Some.  
 121 12 t. Some.  
 122 6 t. SPIRITUAL.  
 123 22 t. Controlling.  
 124 3 t., after ariacn.  
 124 9 t. after it.  
 125 1 t. A.  
 126 20 t. read the Just for just  
 Men.  
 127 26 b.: after unrighteous-  
 ness.  
 127 11 b.; after more—Advanced.  
 128 18 b. Have.  
 128 17 b. 17 before 18.  
 128 11 b. This.  
 129 14 b. The Offended, add by  
 faith and—after HEA-  
 VEN.  
 129 13 b. dele humiliation and.  
 130 7 t. That.  
 130 7 b. Statement—join the pa-  
 ragraph with line 6.  
 133 20 b. Where.  
 134 17 b. Flesh.  
 134 4 b. a, for the—growth.  
 137 27 b. Blood.  
 138 15 b. dele, after It.

Pa. Hne.  
 141 23 t. The MAJESTY.  
 142 21 b. the, for of—Archite.  
 143 16 b. Mighty.  
 144 25 b. Encouraging Words  
 That.  
 144 13, 12 b. join the paragraphs.  
 144 2 b., after Receive and  
 comfort.  
 145 1 b. after Come.  
 145 10 t., after deny and sin-  
 cerity.  
 145 12 t. Itself.  
 146 12 b. The Allwise.  
 147 1 t. SPIRITUAL.  
 148 11 t. indisputably, for infal-  
 libly.  
 152 14 b. for Decalogue, read Pen-  
 tateuch, Deut. xxi. 23.  
 157 16 t. after die.  
 158 1 b. dele, after Men.  
 161 3 b. stopped.  
 163 16 b. His.  
 163 14 b. They.  
 164 4 t. Mankind's.  
 164 2 b. The SPIRITUAL.  
 165 8 t. Which.  
 165 27 b. Merab.  
 165 5 b. That—than, for or.  
 166 4 t., after rest—Well.  
 166 6 t. Their.  
 166 7 t. That.  
 166 21 b. join paragraph with line  
 20.  
 166 2 b., after fight.  
 167 26 b. transpose Δ here.  
 167 23 b. dele Δ.  
 167 11 b. Fire.  
 169 25 b. Which.  
 169 19 b. That.  
 169 16 b. ALMIGHTY, for  
 LORD.  
 169 6 b. faithfulness, for right-  
 eousness.  
 169 5 b. The Man.  
 170 2 t., after him.  
 170 3 t., after Instances.  
 170 5 t. Prophetic.  
 170 17 b. The SPIRIT.  
 170 14 b. The Selfsame.  
 171 5 t. That—Imputed, for ex-  
 alted Righteousness—  
 Which.  
 171 17 t., after Wicked.  
 171 20 t. That.  
 171 4 b. Am.  
 172 18 t. Troop.  
 173 22 t. Adullum.  
 173 4 t., after another.  
 173 7 t. cup-full.  
 173 8 b. after it.  
 176 7 b. This.  
 178 9 t. more, for most.  
 178 14 t. That.  
 178 17 t. That.  
 179 13 b. That.  
 180 14 t. Answered.  
 181 23 t. Be.  
 181 25 t. With.  
 181 11 b. Vested.  
 181 8 b. All.  
 182 4 b.; after Hebron.  
 182 1 b., after died.  
 183 2 t., after Mahli.  
 184 23 t. read Divine Service.  
 186 25 b. came.  
 186 24 b. Shuppm, for Asuppm.  
 187 14 t. Man.  
 189 8 t. dele, after stock.  
 189 13 b. The Dignity.  
 190 11 t. The PRINCE.  
 190 12 t. Interposition.  
 190 1 b. treasures, for trea-  
 sures.  
 191 2 t. All That.  
 191 9 b. That.  
 193 18 t. There.

Pa. line.  
 193 24 b. Where—Where.  
 „ 21 b. , after too.  
 „ 10 b. The MAJESTY.  
 194 1 t. All.  
 „ 9 t. ! after provision.  
 „ 26 b. All Things.  
 „ 25 b. The Highest.  
 „ 13 b. , after humility.  
 „ 1 b. Life.  
 195 3 t. Which.  
 „ 7 t. A GOD.  
 „ 21 t. Thee.  
 „ 25 t. That.  
 „ 28 t. , after Soul.  
 196 17 t. 17 before 18.  
 „ 28 t. Horsemen.  
 197 4 t. , after King.  
 „ 2 b. That—Which—Which.  
 198 15 t. One.  
 „ 24 t. Anoint.  
 „ 29 t. So.  
 „ 16 b. What.  
 „ 2 b. read Sovereign, for King.  
 199 3 t. HIM.  
 „ 6 t. Confirmation.  
 „ 7 t. So.  
 „ 10 t. That.  
 „ 18 b. Be.  
 „ 12 b. Oil Anointed.  
 „ 4 b. bringest, for bringeth.  
 200 3 t. Anointed.  
 „ 5 t. Better.  
 „ 6 t. Greater.  
 „ 7 t. said, for saith.  
 „ 22 t. Been.  
 „ 17 b. Further.  
 201 7 t. That.  
 „ 29 t. with, for and.  
 „ 18 b. , after Word.  
 203 1 t. SON.  
 „ 8 t. All.  
 „ 10 t. die, for died.  
 „ 14 t. Where, Where.  
 „ 15 t. Visual.  
 „ 17 t. Talents.  
 204 6 b. Authors.  
 205 3 t. Occurrence.  
 „ 5 t. Therein.  
 „ 6 t. SON.  
 „ 7 t. SON.  
 206 21 t. , after accords.  
 „ 23 t. , after Father.  
 „ 17 b. Wisdom.  
 „ 13 b. SON.  
 „ 8 b. He.  
 „ 6 b. SON.  
 207 1 t. SPIRITUAL—, too,  
 „ 9 t. That of, after to.  
 „ 23 t. , after GHOST.  
 „ 28 t. A SON.  
 „ 29 t. A Virgin.  
 „ 14 b. That.  
 208 16 t. That The Presence.  
 „ 23 t. Ministration for administration.  
 „ 23 b. Saying.  
 209 7 t. on, for upon—: after to Generation.  
 „ 9 t. : after hearts.  
 „ 10 t. : after degree—Things.  
 „ 11 t. : after away.  
 „ 24 t. Sayings.  
 „ 35 t. , after they.  
 „ 21 b. : after Covenant—The Oath,  
 „ 14 b. Whereby  
 210 5 t. This.  
 „ 6 t. : after you—Ye—The BARE.  
 „ 8 t. : after Highest.  
 „ 15 t. , after They.  
 „ 18 t. dele / after and before they.  
 „ 11 b. which, for that.  
 „ 6 b. are for were—Women.

Pa. line.  
 210 5 b. hath, for have—risen, for arisen—notwithstanding, for but that—is, for was.  
 „ 4 b. is, for was.  
 „ 3 b. although, for notwithstanding.  
 211 1 t. to, before come.  
 „ 14 t. This.  
 „ 21 t. Spirit.  
 „ 23 t. , after But—! after alas.  
 „ 25 t. On.  
 „ 5 b. Effect.  
 „ 4 b. Such—Conception.  
 212 21 t. Thereby.  
 „ 25 t. Salutation—dele , after her.  
 „ 11 b. Which.  
 „ 9 b. That—Which.  
 213 13 t. The Second ADAM.  
 „ 4 b. , after saw.  
 214 1 t. Evidences.  
 „ 3 t. Countenance.  
 „ 19 t. The Promised.  
 „ 20 t. Expected.  
 „ 29 t. ; after John.  
 „ 8 b. Some.  
 215 9 t. into, for unto.  
 „ 12 t. All.  
 „ 13 t. All.  
 „ 17 t. That.  
 „ 18 b. That.  
 „ 10 b. This.  
 „ 8 b. All.  
 „ 7 b. So.  
 216 19 t. A SON.  
 „ 21 t. With.  
 „ 24 t. The Lowly.  
 217 1 t. That.  
 „ 23 b. Where.  
 218 22 b. Shine.  
 „ 17 b. lx., for x. Isa.  
 „ 6 b. That—Which.  
 „ 1 b. proves.  
 219 9 t. The New.  
 „ 23 b. , after Peace.  
 220 10 b. About.  
 221 5 t. taught.  
 „ 25 t. Hand—This—He—That.  
 „ 1 b. Fact.  
 222 12 t. , after Revelation.  
 „ 22 t. Wonderful.  
 „ 22 b. Such.  
 „ 20 b. Such.  
 223 12 t. Baptized.  
 „ 20 b. (xl. 3) after Prophet.  
 224 6 t. Man—spoke.  
 „ 3 b. Open!  
 226 2 t. The Promise That—adding.  
 227 14 t. ; after 17—adding  
 „ 21 t. Was.  
 „ 24 b. xl. 3 after Esaias.  
 „ 17 b. saith, for said.  
 „ 15 b. Was.  
 228 7 b. A VOICE.  
 229 29 t. unto The, for to The.  
 „ 30 t. dele Eternal.  
 „ 12 b. Baptism.  
 230 12 t. By, for With.  
 „ 25 t. Change.  
 „ 2 b. Was—Was.  
 231 1 t. afterward.  
 „ 11 t. Instance.  
 „ 25 t. afterward.  
 „ 8 b. dele , after Intent (he added.).  
 232 18 t. , after continued—It.  
 „ 17 t. , after Written.  
 „ 16 b. Be With.  
 233 13 t. Temptations.  
 „ 9 b. to 15, for 14.  
 „ 6 b. ! after truth.  
 „ 3 b. ! after only.  
 234 8 t. Temptation.  
 „ 8 t. That.  
 „ 13 t. , after Fasting.

Pa. line.  
 234 15 b. The Bread.  
 „ 7 b. , after Work.  
 235 28 t. of, for to.  
 „ 16 b. The Living.  
 236 2 t. , after Peace.  
 „ 3 t. , after Him.  
 „ 15 t. : after Gentiles.  
 „ 21 t. : after in darkness.  
 „ 24 b. : after Great Light.  
 „ 21 b. , after Opened.  
 237 12 t. add 2, after 1.  
 „ 19 t. All.  
 „ 15 b. Residents in, for attention of.  
 239 20 t. Gennesaret.  
 „ 18 b. they, for thy.  
 240 13 t. , after God.  
 „ 6 b. lunatick.  
 241 4 t. ; after Diseased.  
 „ 21 t. Encouragement.  
 „ 15 b. The MESSIAH.  
 „ 2 b. Opening.  
 242 14 t. Oh.  
 „ 15 t. Belonged.  
 243—6 t. That Which.  
 „ 14 t. dele Himself.  
 „ 26 t. , after Iscariot.  
 „ 21 b. , after Named.  
 „ 18 b. , after Iscariot.  
 „ 10 b. Devoted.  
 „ 4 b. listened.  
 244 15 b. dele to—substitute and.  
 „ 11 b. Consolation.  
 „ 8 b. , after for—That—, after be.  
 „ 6 b. Be—With—Be.  
 245 20 t. , after for.  
 „ 25 t. That Which.  
 „ 26 t. That Which.  
 „ 14 b. ; after eat.  
 „ 12 b. That Which.  
 246 4 t. ! after not.  
 „ 16 t. , after Rejoicing, and after Jerusalem.  
 247 7 t. Others.  
 „ 16 t. All.  
 „ 20 t. ! after LORD.  
 „ 24 t. The Sons.  
 „ 26 t. What.  
 „ 17 b. are, for so.  
 „ 16 b. dele that and may—read, they that will.  
 „ 2 b. Joy—These.  
 248 19 t. Hope.  
 „ 3 b. his.  
 249 26 t. The Acts—The Name.  
 „ 15 b. The Offer.  
 „ 7 b. The Coming.  
 250 12 t. Which.  
 251 15 t. Where.  
 „ 18 b. The DEITY.  
 „ 4 b. Thereof.  
 252 19 t. Say.  
 „ 23 b. PERSON.  
 „ 14 b. Fail.  
 „ 11 b. It.  
 „ 9 b. The Precious.  
 „ 2 b. This.  
 „ 1 b. dele , after Sinner.  
 253 4 t. That.  
 „ 11 t. dele 4-8—And—add 3—In.  
 „ 15 t. dele And—In.  
 „ 15 b. That.  
 254 1 b. Sentence.  
 255 28 t. Table, for Altar.  
 256 8 t. ; after Prison.  
 „ 7 t. Interests.  
 „ 5 b. dele 5—add 7.  
 „ 1 b. will.  
 257 24 t. , after for.  
 „ 29 t. dele , after Bathsheba.  
 „ 21 b. : after eyes.  
 „ 9 b. Adulteress.  
 258 2 t. might, for should.  
 „ 3 t. provided, for because.

Pa. Hsa.  
 258 8 t. The Meek.  
 " 19 t. dele by—substitute the.  
 " 3 b. , after her.  
 " 1 b. Godly.  
 259 20 b. Him.  
 " 4 b. Adulteress.  
 " 3 b. Adulteress.  
 260 11 t. Say.  
 261 10 t. Thus Glorifying.  
 " 14 t. ; after Himself.  
 262 16 t. ; after Indeed.  
 " 2 b. Hope.  
 263 4 t. to, for unto.  
 " 23 t. ; after wanteth.  
 " 28 t. dele to 11—add 8, 10, 11.  
 " 10 b. unto, for to.  
 " 6 b. dele 10—add 86.  
 264 23 t. dele 11—add 9—16.  
 " 23 b. Others.  
 " 18 b. dele, after Salvation.  
 " 3 b. The Blessed.  
 " 2 b. This.  
 265 7 t. This.  
 " 14 t. ; after again: *See*  
 " 15 t. after HIGHEST.  
 " 16 t. add to, before the Evil.  
 " 9 b. after PRIEST.  
 266 26 t. , after despair.  
 " 31 t. Eternal.  
 " 2 b. after Return.  
 267 4 t. This.  
 " 18 t. shalt, for shall.  
 " 27 t. Communion.  
 " 8 b. That.  
 " 2 b. Granted.  
 " 9 t. heard.  
 268 16 t. Grace—Lead.  
 " 17 t. Fit.  
 " 19 t. Souls.  
 " 24 t. , after Withholds.  
 " 17 b. This.  
 " 6 b. All.  
 269 17 t. Cried.  
 " 24 b. All.  
 " 23 b. There.  
 " 21 b. after here.  
 " 9 b. dele and.  
 270 4 t. What.  
 " 8 t. Which.  
 " 15 b. dele first.  
 " 10 b. (however—weaknesses).  
 " 2 b. But Deliver us from evil—add after temptation!  
 271 19 t. ; after own.  
 " 25 t. since, instead of for.  
 " 21 b. The Same.  
 272 8 t. All.  
 " 9 t. That.  
 " 23 t. after Amen.  
 " 10 b. On.  
 273 16 t. This.  
 " 22 t. A Sacrifice.  
 " 16 b. , after away.  
 " 9 b. Any.  
 274 8 t. Communion.  
 " 12 b. Say—Am.  
 " 3 b. Them.  
 275 3 t. Where.  
 " 12 t. Others.  
 " 15 t. dele, after poor.  
 " 23 b. dele, after Let.  
 " 4 b. And.  
 276 8 t. Where.  
 " 17 b. purposes.  
 277 20 t. ; after different.  
 " 23 b. Whosoever, for Whoso.  
 " 22 b. thus, for then.  
 " 18 b. read, whom his LORD.  
 " 7 b. What.  
 " 2 b. , after sin.  
 278 16 b. That.  
 279 3 t. after on.  
 280 2 t. All.  
 " 10 t. the before Celestial.  
 " 22 t. ecstatically.

Pa. Hsa.  
 281 6 t. Things.  
 " 8 t. This.  
 " 18 t. , after For and Mercy.  
 " 27 t. Things.  
 " 5 b. , after morrow.  
 282 25 b. ; after Judgment.  
 " 24 b. , after for.  
 283 3 t. Measured.  
 " 5 t. , after beam.  
 284 13 t. ; after Devil.  
 " 15 t. Them.  
 " 16 b. They.  
 285 24 b. a before fish.  
 " 22 b. Him.  
 286 1 t. Ch. vii. for vi.  
 " 6 t. Freely.  
 " 8 t. Individually.  
 " 12 t. 'original sin.'  
 " 12 t. Such.  
 " 27 t. Excited *sustained*.  
 " 16 b. the same.  
 " 4 b. , after walk.  
 287 2 t. , after walk.  
 " 14 t. This.  
 " 12 t. , after that.  
 " 19 b. Things.  
 " 6 b. One.  
 288 10 t. Destruction.  
 " 10 t. ; after Life.  
 " 30 t. dele, after blind.  
 " 16 b. That.  
 " 3 b. , after sweet.  
 289 4 t. , after Imaginations.  
 " 9 t. clothing.  
 " 22 b. All.  
 " 21 b. Thus.  
 " 8 b. prophesy.  
 290 13 t. ; after them.  
 " 27 b. dele to.  
 " 17 b. , after divine.  
 291 14 b. dele, after briars and up.  
 " 8 b. , after warfare.  
 292 2 t. That.  
 " 9 t. , after fruit.  
 " 13 b. LORD! LORD!  
 " 4 b. Countenance.  
 293 5 b. , after who.  
 294 13 t. , after Men.  
 " 23 t. Driven.  
 " 16 b. That. Hope.  
 " 9 b. , after Life.  
 295 17 t. after CHRIST. This  
 " for His.  
 " 15 t. add to after 11.  
 297 16 b. All.  
 298 24 t. humblemindedness.  
 " 17 b. This.  
 " 7 b. , after love.  
 " 6 b. , after Charity.  
 " 4 b. dele, after Christians.  
 299 2 t. Thou.  
 " 16 t. , after Centurion's.  
 " 11 b. The Peaceful.  
 300 5 t. This.  
 " 21 t. Fulfilment.  
 " 25 t. Prophecy.  
 " 27 t. This.  
 " 4 b. Thereby.  
 301 10 t. Ministering.  
 " 17 t. ; after GOD.  
 " (am) after Paul.  
 " 16 b. Least.  
 " 14 b. , after see. What.  
 " 1 b. dele, after blood.  
 302 24 b. dele, after Happiness.  
 303 5 b. 'midst.  
 304 11 b. Hath.  
 305 4 t. ; after Will.  
 " 13 t. Hath.  
 " 8 b. So.  
 306 14 b. us after beset.  
 " 10 b. terror—for—alarm.  
 309 7 b. come—for—came.  
 " 8 b. ; after Law.  
 310 23 t. ; after sought.  
 " 14 b. This.

Pa. Hsa.  
 311 10 t. Spirits.  
 " 11 b. Such.  
 " 10 b. Such.  
 312 21 b. Say.  
 " 18 b. Monument.  
 " 16 b. , after obedience.  
 313 23 t. dele, after Apostleship  
 " 28 t. , after what and Minds  
 " 10 b. Things.  
 314 1 t. Those.  
 " 3 t. The Blessed.  
 " 13 t. The Gracious.  
 " 16 b. sat.  
 315 20 t. His.  
 " 21 b. This.  
 317 8 t. THE PERSON.  
 " 10 t. Resembled.  
 " 9 b. Those.  
 " 4 b. THE FOUNTAIN.  
 " 2 b. Religion.  
 318 16 t. after faith.  
 " 12 b. Inferrible.  
 319 18 t. Sin.  
 " 23 t. ; after prayer.  
 " 20 b. Any.  
 320 6 t. , after Words.  
 " 11 b. , after dissolution.  
 321 18 b. GOD.  
 " 5 b. SON.  
 322 12 t. This.  
 " 18 b. Such.  
 " 11 b. THE SUN.  
 " 10 b. transcendently.  
 323 21 b. They.  
 " 18 b. Transcendent.  
 " 17 b. The Person.  
 324 1 t. Steps.  
 " 7 t. , after that.  
 " 9 t. , after effected.  
 " 17 t. That.  
 " 24 b. This.  
 " 23 b. Flocks.  
 325 29 b. ONE.  
 " 4 b. dele, after Faith and  
 " Hope.  
 " 3 b. THE HOLY.  
 326 8 t. All.  
 " 13 t. THE SUN.  
 " 23 t. That.  
 " 9 t. True.  
 327 10 t. Circumstance.  
 " 11 t. Those.  
 " 1 b. Thus.  
 328 19 b. Prayer.  
 " 14 b. Less.  
 329 3 t. Agency.  
 " 7 t. That.  
 " 18 t. , before remembering.  
 " 13 b. transcendently.  
 330 10 t. This.  
 " 13 t. after us.  
 " 25 b. All.  
 " 20 b. Grace.  
 331 2 t. dele, after Influence.  
 " 28 t. Things.  
 332 3 t. HIGH.  
 " 7 t. dele, after GOD.  
 333 14 b. All.  
 " 13 b. Worldly.  
 334 15 t. though—for—but—  
 " Exhibiting.  
 " 18 t. the Apostles.  
 " 20 b. All.  
 " 18 b. after night.  
 " 5 b. What.  
 336 2 t. This.  
 " 21 t. dele, after purity.  
 " 22 t. , after Sometimes.  
 " 12 b. One.  
 " 2 b. dele be.  
 337 17 t. That.  
 " 18 t. , after doctrine.  
 " 19 t. , after apply.  
 " 20 t. , after Jerusalem.  
 " 23 t. Such.  
 " 21 b. THE MASTER His.

| Pa. Hsa.                          | Pa. Hsa.                          | Pa. Hsa.                             |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 337 13 b. The Para.               | 366 11 t. So.                     | 380 29 t. thou art, for, the Pro-    |
| 338 10 t. Sent.                   | " 18 t. to—for—of St. John.       | phet is.                             |
| " 11 t. He That Sent.             | " 15 t. Loud.                     | " 31 t. thy, for, his.               |
| " 20 t. Those.                    | 367 20 t. dele, after armed.      | " 18 b. Be.                          |
| " 3 b. shall—for—shalt.           | " 20 b. This. All Things.         | 381 14 t. Thus.                      |
| 339 5 t. That.                    | " 16 b. dele, after LORD.         | " 19 b. All Things.                  |
| 340 14 b. An.                     | " 8 b. Which.                     | " 11 b. All that.                    |
| " 6 b. Person.                    | " 4 b. dele to exclude our-       | 382 7 t. Thus.                       |
| 342 12 b. before become, add—by   | selves.                           | " 11 t. The Word Which.              |
| faith Therein.                    | 367 5 t. dele, after anguish.     | " 19 t. on, for, in.                 |
| 343 1 t. Will.                    | " 16 b. , after for.              | " 12 b. That.                        |
| " 3 t. dele, after house. , after | " 2 b. dele 58.                   | " 7 b. That.                         |
| divided.                          | 368 4 t. read John v.             | 383 19 b. The Day.                   |
| " 22 t. He.                       | " 17 t. All Things.               | " 12 b. That.                        |
| " 28 t. This.                     | 369 16 b. Justice That Which.     | " 11 b. after them, add, that        |
| " 20 b. This.                     | " 10 b. All The Other.            | feared Me.                           |
| " 1 b. This.                      | " 9 b. So.                        | " 9 b. add 16 after iii.             |
| 314 11 b. Acceptance.             | " 8 b. GOD.                       | 384 7 t. Foretold.                   |
| " 10 b. Acceptance.               | 370 5 t. The Mild.                | " 7 b. They.                         |
| 345 1 t. Such Spirit.             | " 10 t. Communion.                | 385 25 t. Hid.                       |
| " 6 t. dele, after same.          | " 12 t. Received.                 | " 29 t. They.                        |
| " 7 b. ; after Believers.         | " 24 t. She.                      | " 10 b. Root.                        |
| 346 16 t. This Incident.          | " 29 t. That.                     | " 7 b. Those.                        |
| " 27 b. The Expected.             | " 30 t. Which.                    | 386 4 t. The Whole.                  |
| " 14 b. The DIVINITY.             | 371 14 t. the Same.               | " 5 t. on, for, in.                  |
| " 11 b. Confirmed.                | " 21 t. Account of the Queen of   | " 16 t. State.                       |
| " 3 b. Those.                     | Sheba's.                          | " 18 t. Those.                       |
| 347 30 t. f after Come.           | 372 9 t. uncleanness.             | 387 1 t. another.                    |
| " 31 t. that.                     | " 18 t. ; after Life.             | " 4 t. Ripe.                         |
| 348 19 t. The Advent.             | " 27 t. , after there.            | " 18 b. , after minded.              |
| " 23 t. dele, after find.         | " 29 t. , after it.               | 388 20 b. , after Distinction.       |
| " 23 t. Inducing.                 | " 30 t. , after 13.               | " 17 b. dele and.                    |
| " 14 b. Office.                   | 373 21 b. Her.                    | " 15 b. dele, after Believing.       |
| " 7 b. And This He.               | " 9 b. That.                      | 389 18 t. PERSON.                    |
| 349 8 t. And.                     | " 4 b. Wherein.                   | " 26 t. These Circumstances.         |
| " 9 t. He.                        | 374 9 b. after 1 John ii. 17, add | " 19 b. Same.                        |
| " 22 t. himself.                  | Luke xi. 27, 28, where it         | 390 8 t. This.                       |
| " 8 b. The Visual.                | is thus Reported:—" A             | " 20 t. read, after vi., 3 to half   |
| " 6 b. He.                        | certain Woman in the              | of 6.                                |
| 350 16 t. That.                   | Company around JESUS              | " 25 b. That.                        |
| 351 16 b. : after This.           | lifted up her voice, and          | 391 11 b. , after where.             |
| " 4 b. 29 for 28.                 | said unto Him, 'Blessed           | " 13 b. ; after manner.              |
| 352 7 t. Baptism.                 | is the Womb, that bare            | " 9 b. , after appeared.             |
| " 19 b. The Meek.                 | Thee, and the Paps, which         | 392 15 t. the, for, this Evangelist. |
| 353 8 t. HEAVEN.                  | Thou hast sucked.' But            | 393 27 b. , after Resurrection.      |
| " 9 t. HEAVEN.                    | He Said, 'Yea, Rather             | " 11 b. Them.                        |
| 354 2 t. RESPECTOR.               | Blessed are They, that            | " 10 b. Them.                        |
| " 4 t. Those.                     | hear the Word of GOD              | " 4 b. It.                           |
| " 6 t. for, after as.             | and keep 18."                     | 395 12 b. Statement—Things.          |
| " 24 t. Calling.                  | 375 8 b. Godly.                   | " 6 b. This.                         |
| " 30 t. , after Presence.         | 376 7 t. ; after objects.         | 396 8 t. Distributed.                |
| " 23 b. This.                     | " 17 t. dele, after pliant.       | " 28 b. Pray.                        |
| " 21 b. These.                    | " 19 t. That.                     | " 19 b. Communion.                   |
| " 7 b. These Them.                | " 20 t. The Gospel adorned.       | " 5 b. read, Who—, after con-        |
| 355 9 t. All.                     | " 17 b. dele, after Sublime.      | clude.                               |
| " 14 t. That.                     | 377 1 b. The Image.               | 398 6 t. Faith.                      |
| " 22 t. All.                      | 378 11 t. The LORD.               | " 18 t. awaits.                      |
| " 23 t. This.                     | " 27 t. but—before, to Others.    | " 15 b. This—dele, after This.       |
| " 26 t. Which.                    | 379 5 t. Those—Those.             | " 4 b. Those.                        |
| " 30 t. All.                      | " 25 t. That.                     | 399 14 b. Sacrament, for, Sacrifice. |
| " 21 b. have, before believed.    | " 27 t. That.                     | " 11 b. Baptized.                    |
| 356 14 t. Merciful.               | " 17 b. , after out.              | 400 1 t. The True.                   |
| 357 20 b. , after hand.           | " 4 b. This All.                  | " 4 t. f after World.                |
| " 18 b. ; after of men. : after   | " 2 b. That.                      | " 7 t. So.                           |
| power.                            | 380 1 t. This.                    | " 11 t. Assurance.                   |
| 358 23 t. , after All.            | " 22 t. before Ezekiel — intro-   | " 13 t. read, yet how seldom are     |
| " 24 t. , after is.               | duce—in The LORD's                | our hearts near Him.                 |
| " 16 b. , after Reason.           | Communing with Ezekiel            | " 23 t. , after were.                |
| 360 33 t. 16 before 25.           | are.                              | " 28 t. The Presence.                |
| " 9 b. , after callous.           | " 24 t. after course—add—HE       | " 17 b. Thence.                      |
| " 8 b. , after sensuality.        | Said, Thou Son of Man,            | " 8 b. They.                         |
| " 4 b. ; after balance.           | the Children of thy People        | " 6 b. , after false and che-        |
| " 3 b. f after Desolation.        | still are talking against         | rishd. <i>Page 811</i>               |
| 363 3 t. This.                    | thee by the walls and in          | " 4 b. ; after GOD.                  |
| " 14 t. The SON.                  | the doors of the houses,          | 401 9 t. f after possession.         |
| " 8 b. dele Δ.                    | and speak One to Another,         | " 11 t. , after view.                |
| 364 1 t. CH. xli. for xi.         | every One to his Brother,         | " 30 t. Heart.                       |
| " 5 t. came, for come.            | saying, Come, I pray—             | 402 9 t. after one, add, glaring     |
| " 28 t. f after Influence.        | omitting (says he).               | instance—dele glaring in-            |
| " 2 b. , after Kingdom.           | " 26 t. substitute, thee—for, the | stance after.                        |
| " 1 b. against a House.           | Prophet of the LORD.              | " 16 t. , before unmindful.          |
| 365 8 t. after GOD.               | " 27 t. substitute, thee as My—   | " 12 b. Prophecy.                    |
| " 19 t. Thus.                     | for, Prophet as The               | 403 18 b. Things.                    |
| " 7 b. dele, after faith.         | LORD, substitute, thy             | 404 7 t. opinionated.                |
| 366 5 t. All.                     | for the dele of the Pro-          | 405 3 t. after day.                  |
| " 7 t. , after Mercies.           | phet.                             | " 13 t. dele (then).                 |



| Pa. Hae.                            | Pa. Hae.                              | Pa. Hae.                         |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 405 21 t. This.                     | 422 24 t. , after evil.               | 446 11 b. , after offences.      |
| 14 b. dele , after World.           | 25 t. , after qualities.              | 5 b. Being.                      |
| 8 b. What.                          | 15 b. more after much.                | 447 25 t. forgive sought.        |
| 7 b. This.                          | 14 b. after JESUS.                    | 7 b. shouldst.                   |
| 4 b. Things.                        | 423 6 t. dele , after Prudence.       | 448 7 t. after depends.          |
| 406 17 t. after it, add, in time—   | 29 t. and 7, for, to 8.               | 9 b. dele and.                   |
| dele in time, after.                | 20 b. The MAJESTY                     | 449 7 t. after MAKER.            |
| 24 b. Occasion.                     | 2 t. Laid.                            | 23 t. Thereof.                   |
| 18 b. SON.                          | 19 b. compassion.                     | 23 t. Generation.                |
| 5 b. That.                          | 11 b. read, Patriarch, Job            | 28 t. of for or, and or for of.  |
| 407 1 t. , after influence.         | [xxxiv. 11, 12.]                      | 20 b. Another.                   |
| 2 t. Those.                         | 425 9 t. no stop after by the Law.    | 12 b. Where—Where.               |
| 6 t. SON.                           | 14 t. , after Another.                | 450 18 b. dele , after wretched— |
| 21 t. RESPECTER.                    | 16 t. All.                            | nead.                            |
| 25 t. , after Zion.                 | 17 t. Things.                         | 451 18 b. These.                 |
| 22 b. One.                          | 18 b. All.                            | 452 10 t. They One.              |
| 6 b. , after suggestion.            | 11 b. Them.                           | 20 t. dele and after Source.     |
| 408 8 t. Judaea.                    | 426 2 t. SPIRITUAL.                   | 19 b. Countrymen.                |
| 13 t. , after that So.              | 6 t. dele , after them.               | 453 16 t. dele so.               |
| 16 b. So.                           | 7 t. A Heavenly.                      | 25 t. , after that.              |
| 14 b. A Light.                      | 10 t. after Elijah, (Both.            | 454 16 b. They.                  |
| 10 b. Though.                       | 12 t. found).                         | 455 2 t. Married.                |
| 409 24 t. Things.                   | 25 t. , after be.                     | 3 t. her, for the                |
| 410 2 t. All Things Well.           | 427 12 b. and 33, for, to 34.         | 5 t. after Wife.                 |
| 3 t. add, after 37, This            | 7 b. Them.                            | 14 t. The Apostle.               |
| Evangelist singled out              | 428 11 t. A PROPHET.                  | 10 b. or, for and after secured. |
| this extreme Case among             | 19 t. The Transfiguration.            | nead.                            |
| the Many.                           | 21 t. Transfigured.                   | 456 2 b. cons.                   |
| 4 t. Such.                          | 25 t. dele , after hopes.             | 457 24 t. , after Children.      |
| 6 t. Unstopped.                     | 429 17 t. , after about.              | 15 t. , after GOD—Where.         |
| 16 b. dele , after barley.          | 14 b. dele , after Develop—           | 24 t. That.                      |
| 411 18 t. Left.                     | The DIVINITY.                         | 5 b. , after information.        |
| 27 t. Both.                         | 430 5 t. All.                         | 2 b. after And.                  |
| 12 b. dele , after Ship.            | 9 t. dele , after Fire.               | 458 12 b. Consummate.            |
| 412 1 t. She.                       | 19 b. All.                            | 459 24 t. The Commandment's      |
| 6 t. Observation That.              | 3 b. Things.                          | Which.                           |
| 9 t. Matters.                       | 431 1 t. They.                        | 460 12 t. This—The Royal.        |
| 20 t. The Book.                     | 15 t. A Suffering.                    | 24 t. dele them.                 |
| 19 b. Them.                         | 23 b. hath, for had.                  | 461 1 t. Those.                  |
| 413 9 t. for against, read, to seek | 20 b. Be.                             | 5 t. is, after Such—dele ,       |
| the Downfall.                       | 432 10 t. Be.                         | after Such.                      |
| 26 t. : after upon.                 | 11 t. thy.                            | 7 t. dele is.                    |
| 3 b. Them.                          | 434 18 t. That.                       | 22 t. Where.                     |
| 414 20 b. , after Example.          | 9 b. Kill.                            | 20 b. confidently.               |
| 13 b. That, before I am.            | 3 b. Hid.                             | 463 4 t. Committed.              |
| 415 14 t. Hast.                     | 435 18 b. unto, for to.               | 23 b. dele 21.                   |
| 15 b. PERSON.                       | 436 25 b. The Meek.                   | 14 b. before if.                 |
| 416 1 t. Work.                      | 10 b. Baptism, and add—if             | 11 b. , after CHRIST.            |
| 21 t. him.                          | obtainable; and, if not,              | 6 b. at, for to—That.            |
| 22 t. him.                          | we may hope without it?               | 464 16 t. This.                  |
| 25 t. Things—Things.                | 437 15 t. Greatest. <i>Person</i>     | 29 t. , after when.              |
| 26 t. their, before Salvation.      | 29 t. Greatest. <i>Applianie</i>      | 20 b. Kind.                      |
| 27 t. Heb. v. 9, for Ps. iv. 4.     | 5 b. Eccles.                          | 17 b. , after give.              |
| 16 b. All Things.                   | 438 11 t. : after circumstances.      | 4 b. Where.                      |
| 417 16 t. Hidden.                   | 12 t. This.                           | 465 3 t. , after all.            |
| 20 t. dele , after less.            | 20 b. read, into which he             | 9 t. Those.                      |
| 25 t. The Household.                | may have been Baptized                | 15 t. They.                      |
| 19 b. Authority.                    | by The HOLY GHOST.                    | 18 b. , after Light.             |
| 18 b. , after understood.           | 10 b. had.                            | 15 b. dele , after Sin and       |
| 17 b. Authority.                    | 7 b. The SUN.                         | Death.                           |
| 10 b. Assumption.                   | 439 7 b. dele who were.               | 9 b. Sufficiency.                |
| 6 b. Early.                         | 1 b. , after than.                    | 466 26 t. Last.                  |
| 3 b. Assumption.                    | 440 21 t. after Baptism, add, of      | 5 b. dele , after FATHER.        |
| 418 2 t. This.                      | The HOLY SPIRIT.                      | 467 8 b. Insuring.               |
| 4 t. These.                         | 24 t. Children, for them.             | 468 13 t. after Others.          |
| 9 t. The Last.                      | 18 b. has, for had.                   | 14 t. Mind.                      |
| 20 t. That.                         | 11 b. The Visual.                     | 22 t. after Therein.             |
| 23 t. dele , after Satan.           | 441 20 b. Relationship.               | 17 b. The Death.                 |
| 24 t. The Power.                    | 15 b. Holiness.                       | 8 b. dele , after formed.        |
| 25 t. Greater.                      | 8 b. That.                            | 1 b. That.                       |
| 23 b. read, the Motive of.          | 7 b. Thus.                            | 469 11 t. Therest.               |
| 18 b. , after works.                | 3 b. Occasion.                        | 23 b. Priests.                   |
| 9 b. The SON.                       | 442 15 t. This.                       | 20 b. Rise.                      |
| 419 11 t. Report Occasion.          | 18 t. wilderness.                     | 9 b. Them.                       |
| 13 t. Occasion.                     | 26 t. , after Israel Hath.            | 470 2 t. The Lowly.              |
| 14 t. Recorded.                     | 19 b. wilderness.                     | 17 t. Thing.                     |
| 420 1 t. Characterised.             | 443 2 b. , before not.                | 21 t. That.                      |
| 421 10 t. This.                     | 444 1 t. dele , after interference.   | 24 t. Sit.                       |
| 28 t. Therein.                      | 26 b. Had Rather.                     | 17 b. That.                      |
| 22 b. Judaea.                       | 445 28 t. a subsequent, for an after. | 6 b. That.                       |
| 11 b. thy.                          | 18 b. There Am.                       | 5 b. said.                       |
| 422 16 t. dele , after Exaltation.  | 446 6 t. This.                        | 4 b. That.                       |
| 17 t. The Presence.                 | 8 t. to, for by essentially.          | 3 b. Sit.                        |
| 18 t. after Result.                 | 21 t. his.                            | 471 4 t. What.                   |
| 19 t. dele , after Life, and        | 24 t. That.                           | 23 t. Let This.                  |
| Light.                              | 12 b. , after up.                     | 15 b. The Baptism.               |
|                                     |                                       | 11 b. after ceremonial, add      |

Pa. Hsa.  
though Essentially SPI-  
RITUAL is Effectual It  
be—A Baptism.

- 471 10 b. dele 51.  
472 1 b. dele necessarily.  
473 23 b. whilst, for and after  
delight; Exhaustless.  
" 20 b. dele and before Each.  
" 12 b. This.  
" 11 b. (who.  
" 9 b. Revealed.)  
474 1 t. The Lowly.  
" 21 t. Characteristic.  
" 26 t. End—Sin.  
" 27 t. That Nature.  
" 28 t. to for unto.  
" 3 b. , after And and Titus.  
476 1 t. Bartimeus—Timæus.  
" 7 t. garment.  
" 27 t. me for Me.  
" 19 b. All.  
477 20 b. Things.  
" 16 b. applauding for tumul-  
tuous.  
" 12 b. This Lesson.  
" 9 b. All dele , after MA-  
JESTY.  
478 10 t. The Highest.  
" 17 b. The Highest.  
479 2 t. Thereby.  
" 15 t. Go.  
" 5 b. , after GOD.  
481 27 b. The Chief.  
" 22 b. The Expected.  
482 5 t. , after sense.  
" 7 t. Peace.  
" 23 t. This—Those.  
" 27 t. The Lowly.  
" 10 b. These.  
" 2 b. This.  
483 15 t. dele , after GOD.  
" 17 t. Them.  
" 16 b. The Meek.  
" 6 b. The House.  
484 3 t. Thus.  
" 8 t. , after Servants.  
" 14 t. The LORD.  
" 18 t. The House.  
" 26 t. Hosts.  
" 8 b. One.  
485 7 b. dele and.  
" 5 b. This.  
486 22 t. What.  
" 26 t. dele , after Faithful.  
" 13 b. Communings.  
488 1 t. Things.  
" 10 t. Things.  
" 15 b. They.  
" 12 b. questioned.  
" 11 b. , after under.  
" 6 b. come.  
" 5 b. come.  
489 2 t. He.  
" 12 t. Woman.  
" 21 t. Baptism.  
" 23 t. He.  
" 26 t. Tell.  
" 7 b. all before them.  
" 2 b. 20 for 21.  
490 12 b. , after Indulgence.  
491 8 t. Acceptable.  
" 11 t. The Call.  
492 4 t. Door—The Watchman.  
" 22 b. , after Thus.  
" 9 b. Former.  
493 7 t. , after GOD.  
" 19 t. Those.  
" 20 t. Their.  
" 15 b. Advanced.  
494 9 t. , after Son.  
" 26 b. HEAVENLY.  
" 17 b. Measure.  
" 8 b. dele and before He.  
" 6 b. HEAVENLY.  
495 3 t. Mercy Wherewith.  
" 11 t. unto them after sent.

Pa. Hsa.  
495 21 t. His.  
" 22 t. The PERSON—The Bo-  
som.

- " 26 t. Pollutions.  
" 14 b. , after us.  
" 13 b. Open.  
" 11 b. beautiful, after most.  
" 10 b. (and many others).  
" 8 b. Planted.  
" 5 b. Broken.  
496 1 t. Strong.  
" 1 b. That.  
497 6 t. dele, after notwithstanding.  
" 16 t. This Parable,  
" 9 b. Thereof.  
" 7 b. This.  
" 3 b. although, for though—  
The Offer.  
" 2 b. confession—The Pec-  
liar.  
" 1 b. HEAVENLY.  
498 1 t. Which.  
" 3 t. Instructs.  
" 4 t. All.  
" 9 t. The True.  
" 19 t. That.  
" 22 t. Stoning.  
" 4 b. The Coming.  
499 15 t. All.  
" 17 t. The Decree.  
" 18 t. The Language.  
" 21 t. This—, after Inherit-  
ance.  
" 25 t. So—So.  
" 23 b. The Brightness—The  
Express.  
" 20 b. So Much—A more.  
" 17 b. The PERSON.  
" 10 b. All.  
500 17 t. Messengers.  
" 20 t. The Same—The Head.  
" 23 b. The Stone.  
" 22 b. The Same.  
" 21 b. The Chief—All.  
" 16 b. The Works.  
" 15 b. Which.  
" 12 b. transcendently.  
" 11 b. The Final.  
" 2 b. That.  
501 1 t. Them This.  
" 2 t. Which.  
" 4 t. for 20, to 21.  
" 9 t. This.  
" 10 t. The Head.  
" 24 b. direct, for pointed.  
" 21 b. Whole.  
" 17 b. Acts iv. for ii.  
502 21 b. That.  
" 12 b. Those.  
" 8 b. , after Kingdom.  
503 2 t. , after gold.  
" 19 t. Joy.  
" 26 t. if, for when.  
504 21 t. That Which.  
" 26 b. This.  
" 21 b. This.  
" 1 b. Withheld.  
505 2 t. , after despair.  
" 7 b. , after Appointed.  
506 3 t. Spirit.  
" 5 t. Spirit.  
" 6 t. , after Thrown.  
" 11 t. falsely.  
" 21 t. Understanding.  
" 23 t. Understanding.  
" 7 b. The LAMB—dele and—  
His.  
507 17 t. Expelled.  
" 19 b. CHRIST'S—dele ,  
" 18 b. Behalf.  
" 1 b. One.  
508 6 t. Which.  
" 19 t. Clothed.  
" 22 t. , after seen.  
" 25 t. Cast.

Pa. Hsa.  
508 30 t. That.  
509 9 t. , after Cæsar.  
" 11 t. money.  
" 13 t. , after things—dele, after  
Cæsar.

- " 14 t. , after Things.  
" 11 b. , after Cæsar's—, after  
Things.  
" 9 b. Relation.  
" 1 b. said, before Cæsar's.  
510 1 t. , after Things.  
" 25 t. Draught Which.  
" 14 b. That.  
" 8 b. Higher.  
" 7 b. That—, after Powers.  
511 2 t. after For, add, for.  
" 6 t. , after Permission.  
" 14 t. So.  
" 21 t. Brawlers.  
" 25 t. All.  
" 24 t. SPIRITUAL.  
" 29 t. All.  
" 22 b. Sovereign, for King.  
" 20 b. That.  
" 7 b. The Heavenly—Burst.  
" 4 b. The Oracles.  
512 2 b. That.  
513 1 t. Those.  
" 19 t. Interview.  
" 8 b. They That.  
" 4 b. calleth.  
514 6 t. That.  
" 5 b. Consequences.  
515 9 t. This.  
" 10 t. , after thee and Genera-  
tion.  
" 11 t. thy.  
" 24 t. That.  
" 23 b. Reason.  
" 10 & 9 b. join paragraphs.  
" 8 b. rather, for properly.  
" 1 b. a fresh paragraph after  
Beatification.  
516 21 t. Help.  
" 27 t. He, before is Become.  
" 23 & 22 b. join the paragraphs.  
" 22 b. , after language and  
triumphant.  
" 17 b. The Commandments.  
517 4 t. Which.  
" 8 t. Which.  
" 17 t. Days Which.  
" 21 t. This.  
" 25 t. fresh paragraph after us?  
" 28 t. — after People All.  
" 29 t. O LORD! after Hand.  
" 23 b. , after reconcilable.  
" 21 b. that That.  
" 20 b. All—All—All.  
" 14 b. All.  
518 5 t. O GOD, after Salvation.  
" 10 t. All.  
" 20 b. There.  
" 19 b. There.  
" 18 b. There.  
519 16 t. LORD, after Thou.  
" 19 t. O LORD, after behold.  
" 17 b. O LORD, after Thee.  
" 11 b. O THOU.  
520 24 t. That.  
" 28 t. This.  
521 10 t. Where.  
" 4 b. They.  
" 3 b. They.  
" 1 b. End—These Things.  
522 1 t. thou, after Go.  
" 19 t. The Day.  
" 22 t. my.  
523 22 t. What.  
" 20 b. Offered.  
" 3 b. These.  
524 23 b. , after Sadducees.  
" 17 b. All him.  
" 13 b. This.  
" 11 b. Additor  
525 26 b. These.

| Pa. | line.                          | Pa. | line.                           | Pa. | line.                           |
|-----|--------------------------------|-----|---------------------------------|-----|---------------------------------|
| 525 | 5 b. That Insisted.            | 549 | 21 b. All.                      | 566 | 15 t. Thereof.                  |
| 526 | 4 t. dele, after CHRIST.       | "   | 7 b. add to, before his.        | "   | 20 t. ; after World.            |
| "   | 29 t. , after for.             | 550 | 7 t. spirit.                    | "   | 26 t. Which.                    |
| "   | 20 b. Same.                    | "   | 9 t. , after Acceptable and     | "   | 12 b. All.                      |
| "   | 3 b. One.                      | "   | not.                            | "   | 8 b. Present—Unblameable.       |
| "   | 2 b. The SPIRIT.               | "   | 19 t. That.                     | 567 | 22 b. , after Daniel.           |
| 527 | 6 t. give.                     | "   | 17 b. Often.                    | "   | 4 <sup>5</sup> b. End.          |
| 528 | 1 t. The Sanctifying.          | 551 | 1 t. That.                      | "   | 3 b. Days—xii. before 12.       |
| "   | 6 t. dele, after perverseness. | "   | 2 t. Often.                     | 568 | 7 t. Which.                     |
| "   | 10 t. Their.                   | "   | 7 t. That.                      | 569 | 5 t. dele, after Spirit.        |
| "   | 15 t. This.                    | 552 | 12 t. , after He.               | "   | 12 t. ; after peace.            |
| "   | 19 t. Footstool.               | "   | 8 b. NATURE.                    | "   | 16 t. , after City.             |
| "   | 19 b. All.                     | 553 | 9 t. NATURE.                    | "   | 26 t. Desolation.               |
| "   | 10 b. A Man.                   | "   | 10 t. Things.                   | "   | 28 t. A Sure.                   |
| "   | 9 b. dele, after GOD.          | "   | 13 t. Awfulness—The Judg-       | 570 | 14 t. thy.                      |
| "   | 6 b. dele, before by wicked—   | "   | ment—That.                      | "   | 18 t. ; after Life.             |
| "   | ; after slain.                 | "   | 16 t. , after Parent.           | "   | 23 t. Such, for they.           |
| 529 | 9 t. Witnesses.                | "   | 19 t. , after expecting.        | "   | 25 t. , after Life.             |
| 530 | 11 t. Do.                      | "   | 20 t. Whole.                    | "   | 26 t. The Bosom.                |
| "   | 15 b. Those.                   | "   | 14 b. him.                      | "   | 17 b. Where.                    |
| "   | 12 b. dele as.                 | 554 | 1 t. The Same — as, for         | "   | 14 b. All who, for Such as.     |
| "   | 11 b. like, for as did.        | "   | when.                           | "   | 10 b. Souls'.                   |
| 531 | 24 t. dele, after Women.       | "   | 2 t. dele, after Micah.         | 571 | 2 t. read, was It as The        |
| "   | 26 t. , after day.             | "   | 11 t. dele, after Prophet.      | "   | Voice of JEHOVAH pro-           |
| "   | 27 t. Those.                   | "   | 17 t. Which.                    | "   | claimed by Zechariah—           |
| 532 | 15 t. The Judgment.            | "   | 19 b. End.                      | "   | dele the Prophet.               |
| "   | 19 t. Indignation — Wrath —    | 555 | 1 t. add deeply after This.     | "   | 23 t. That.                     |
| "   | Tribulation—Anguish.           | "   | 4 t. These.                     | "   | 24 t. Which.                    |
| "   | 24 b. Knowledge.               | "   | 16 t. That.                     | "   | 26 t. Permitted.                |
| "   | 20 b. One.                     | "   | 22 b. Which.                    | "   | 27 t. , before by.              |
| "   | 19 b. One.                     | "   | 6 b. The Voice.                 | "   | 28 t. , after JESUS.            |
| "   | 18 b. , after heart—; after    | "   | 5 b. The Gracious.              | "   | 14 b. The Declaration.          |
| "   | letter.                        | 556 | 4 t. the, for that.             | "   | 6 b. All.                       |
| "   | 8 b. to, for of.               | "   | 5 t. That—When.                 | 572 | 19, 20 t. dele Try the Spirits, |
| 533 | 5 t. Such.                     | "   | 8 t. , after Happiness and      | "   | whether they be of Men          |
| "   | 8 t. , after burden.           | "   | Misery.                         | "   | or of GOD; substitute.          |
| "   | 26 t. than, for that.          | "   | 24 t. That.                     | "   | Let us bear in mind             |
| 535 | 23 t. Issues.                  | "   | 25 t. That.                     | "   | the Apostolic Assurance.        |
| "   | 9 b. his.                      | "   | 28 t. God.                      | "   | That every Spirit, which.       |
| 536 | 28 t. dele, after themselves.  | "   | 29 t. That.                     | "   | 21 t. dele born, and but is of  |
| "   | 17 b. Higher.                  | 558 | 5 t. , after Asa.               | "   | the Devil—add after iv.,        |
| 537 | 13 t. That.                    | "   | 15 t. hearts faint).            | "   | 3—dele 1 to 4.                  |
| "   | 23 b. All.                     | "   | 21 b. The Meek.                 | "   | 10 b. That.                     |
| "   | 14 b. This Same.               | "   | 18 b. Come.                     | "   | 6 b. received.                  |
| "   | 1 b. Where.                    | "   | 15 b. That.                     | "   | 4 b. All.                       |
| 538 | 10 t. Abased.                  | "   | 4 b. Sin.                       | 573 | 31 b. That.                     |
| "   | 1 t. Exalted.                  | 559 | 4 t. This.                      | "   | 12 b. Things.                   |
| "   | 25 b. That.                    | "   | 6 t. These Things.              | 574 | 1 t. Hour.                      |
| "   | 24 b. Therein.                 | "   | 8 t. These Things.              | "   | 14 t. Open.                     |
| "   | 6 b. Those.                    | "   | 9 t. These Things.              | 575 | 5 t. Change—? after cometh.     |
| 539 | 6 t. entered.                  | "   | 22 t. Things.                   | "   | 9 t. Sin.                       |
| "   | 18 t. , after Exposure.        | "   | 26 t. That.                     | "   | 10 t. That—They.                |
| 541 | 16 t. What.                    | "   | 28 t. Same.                     | "   | 11 t. Each.                     |
| "   | 19 t. Spirit.                  | "   | 20 b. , after FATHER.           | "   | 18 t. Words.                    |
| "   | 23 t. Ointment—Therewith.      | 560 | 15 t. The Predictions.          | "   | 21 t. Same.                     |
| "   | 21 b. dele, after Will.        | "   | 17 t. Those.                    | "   | 27 t. ; after travail.          |
| "   | 4 b. Seen.                     | "   | 7 b. , after say.               | "   | 30 t. dele, after Heaven.       |
| 542 | 12 t. Wherein.                 | "   | 2 b. ; after Churches.          | "   | 2 b. Great.                     |
| "   | 22 b. The Nature — The         | 561 | 18 t. , after Those.            | 576 | 15 t. , after High.             |
| "   | Heaven.                        | "   | 22 t. That.                     | 577 | 10 t. , after Glory.            |
| "   | 17 b. There.                   | "   | 23 b. Thus—That.                | "   | 15 t. The PERSON.               |
| "   | 12 b. conversation.            | "   | 6 b. : after ashamed.           | "   | 26 t. All.                      |
| 543 | 22 t. Life.                    | "   | 3 b. That.                      | "   | 24 b. That Illustration.        |
| 544 | 3 t. , after Mercy.            | "   | 4 b. though before All.         | "   | 23 b. Summons.                  |
| "   | 11 b. dele, after deceive.     | "   | 2 b. again.                     | "   | 17 b. Again.                    |
| 545 | 22 t. This—dele, after Luke.   | 562 | 7 t. Test—, after unmasked.     | "   | 7 b. Of.                        |
| "   | 14 b. That.                    | "   | 13 t. Which.                    | 578 | 24 b. , after instruction and   |
| 546 | 3 t. Those.                    | "   | 15 t. departing, for departure. | "   | images.                         |
| "   | 9 b. That.                     | "   | 25 b. dele and before know-     | "   | 18 b. , after invisible.        |
| 547 | 17 t. What.                    | "   | ing.                            | 579 | 10 t. Near.                     |
| "   | 16 b. , after It—Men—but—      | 563 | 9 t. : after GOD.               | "   | 20 t. The Coming.               |
| "   | Truth.                         | "   | 18 t. Human-Kind, for Men.      | "   | 25 t. Door.                     |
| "   | 8 b. influences.               | "   | 3 b. , after truth.             | 580 | 4 t. NATURE.                    |
| "   | 1 b. : after us.               | "   | 2 b. dele, after opinions.      | "   | 6 t. ; after hand.              |
| 548 | 19 t. Thus—Mouth.              | 564 | 9 t. , after Families.          | "   | 9 t. Standeth.                  |
| "   | 20 t. : after God.             | "   | 10 t. Sin.                      | "   | 19 t. My.                       |
| "   | 23 b. There to.                | "   | 27 b. So.                       | "   | 26 b. Changed.                  |
| "   | 14 b. The Precious.            | "   | 25 b. Fulness.                  | "   | 3 b. Which.                     |
| 549 | 3 t. Latter.                   | "   | 3 b. , after Gasp.              | 581 | 4 t. , after Governance.        |
| "   | 5 t. (Who.                     | "   | 2 b. That.                      | "   | 10 t. dele, after Alone.        |
| "   | 6 t. Earth.).                  | "   | 1 b. ; after Thirst.            | "   | 14 t. Hour.                     |
| "   | 11 t. Those.                   | 565 | 6 b. : after Him.               | "   | 27 b. Which.                    |
| "   | 23 t. dele, after Others.      | 566 | 1 t. Yes.                       | "   | 11 b. Which.                    |
| "   | 24 t. What.                    | "   | 7 t. Invited.                   | "   | 9 b. All.                       |
| "   | 27 t. : after MESSIAH.         | "   | 9 t. What.                      | "   | 5 b. : after be—In—! after      |
|     |                                | "   | 13 t. That.                     | "   | Godliness.                      |

| Pa. Hae. |                                 | Pa. Hae. |                               | Pa. Hae. |                                 |
|----------|---------------------------------|----------|-------------------------------|----------|---------------------------------|
| 582      | 6 t. SPIRIT.                    | 593      | 10 b. , after him.            | 602      | 10 t. ; after Righteous.        |
| "        | 18 t. ! after GOD.              | "        | 5 b. All.                     | "        | 14 t. Potion, for Portion—      |
| "        | 21 t. Which.                    | "        | 3 b. That.                    | "        | That Which.                     |
| "        | 22 t. Which.                    | 594      | 4 t. Manifest Graces.         | "        | 15 t. had after having.         |
| "        | 27 t. What.                     | "        | 6 t. Signal.                  | "        | 16 b. There.                    |
| "        | 28 t. Such.                     | "        | 8 t. This.                    | "        | 6 b. Same.                      |
| "        | 20 b. dele s after Blessing.    | "        | 9 t. The Things.              | 603      | 6 t. The Merciful.              |
| "        | 17 b. of, for in endless.       | "        | 10 t. This.                   | "        | 14 t. Them.                     |
| "        | 13 b. , after Description.      | "        | 29 t. required, for received. | "        | 24 b. unto, for under.          |
| "        | 7 b. Ark.                       | "        | 17 b. for their having been,  | "        | 8 b. dele the before Heaven.    |
| 583      | 21 t. , after later.            | "        | read, that The Sayings        | "        | 6 b. ; after rejoice.           |
| "        | 24 t. Justly.                   | "        | were.                         | "        | 5 b. ! after temptations.       |
| 584      | 12 b. The SON.                  | "        | 9 b. Ignorant.                | "        | 3 b. The Appearing.             |
| "        | 9 b. ; after Sardis.            | 595      | 12 t. That.                   | 604      | 1 t. ! after Souls.             |
| "        | 6 b. ; after heard.             | "        | 12 t. envyings, for envies.   | "        | 12 t. The Spiritual.            |
| "        | 5 b. Hour.                      | "        | 14 t. That.                   | "        | 27 t. their, for his.           |
| "        | 3 b. All—All.                   | "        | 20 t. HEAVENLY.               | "        | 2 b. the before neglect.        |
| "        | 1 b. faithfulness, for faith-   | "        | 25 b. dele , after all.       | 605      | 13 t. Flesh.                    |
| "        | lessness.                       | "        | 10 b. Which.                  | "        | 22 t. GOD after LORD.           |
| 585      | 3 t. That.                      | "        | 1 b. Service.                 | "        | 25 t. This.                     |
| "        | 5 t. The Mediation.             | "        | 6 t. Many.                    | "        | 13 b. The Person.               |
| "        | 7 t. Efficacy.                  | 596      | 7 t. One—Members.             | 606      | 2 t. thereafter.                |
| "        | 4 b. ! after Dispensations.     | "        | 9 t. prophesy.                | "        | 3 t. Things.                    |
| "        | 3 b. dele , after persever-     | "        | 23 b. , after Some.           | "        | 5 t. Talent.                    |
| "        | ance.                           | "        | 22 b. after Some—and Some.    | "        | 14 t. Prison.                   |
| 586      | 5 t. , after Stewardships.      | "        | 17 b. Things.                 | "        | 17 t. Which.                    |
| "        | 16 t. ; after faithful.         | "        | 15 b. Where.                  | "        | 25 t. Which.                    |
| "        | 27 t. ! after here.             | "        | 14 b. Required.               | "        | 16 b. So.                       |
| "        | 9 b. Things. <i>There</i>       | "        | 5 b. Way.                     | "        | 13 t. That Effect.              |
| 587      | 5 t. Those—Society.             | 597      | 2 b. Joy.                     | 607      | 7 t. The HOLY.                  |
| "        | 7 t. Everlasting Interests.     | "        | 6 t. Talent Entrusted.        | "        | 15 t. Day.                      |
| "        | 8 t. HEAVENLY.                  | "        | 10 t. Which.                  | "        | 23 t. ; after to Him.           |
| "        | 9 t. ; after Stewardship.       | "        | 12 t. Entrusted All.          | "        | 17 b. Graciously.               |
| "        | 10 t. That.                     | "        | 15 t. unto, for to.           | "        | 14 b. Otherwise.                |
| "        | 11 t. Fire.                     | "        | 24 b. Which.                  | "        | 9 b. Where.                     |
| "        | 12 t. Condition.                | "        | 22 b. That.                   | "        | 8 b. Where.                     |
| "        | 14 t. HEAVENLY.                 | "        | 20 b. That.                   | 608      | 4 t. So.                        |
| "        | 20 t. dele the after are.       | "        | 16 b. sin, after Race That.   | "        | 15 t. add after GOD, and so     |
| "        | 21 t. Both.                     | "        | 11 b. being for as, Which—    | "        | escape Such Condemna-           |
| "        | 26 t. That.                     | "        | , after awaits.               | "        | tion.                           |
| "        | 28 t. That—exhibited, for ex-   | "        | 8 b. the direct—of, for as    | "        | 27 t. The Last.                 |
| "        | perienced—Enough.               | "        | was.                          | "        | 5 & 4 b. Join paragraphs.       |
| "        | 21 b. , after evil—before       | "        | 6 b. HEAVENLY.                | "        | 1 b. dele " before Is.          |
| "        | choose—, before looking.        | "        | 5 b. HEAVENLY.                | 609      | 1 t. dele which course to       |
| "        | 18 b. Affliction.               | "        | 2 b. Which.                   | "        | take.                           |
| "        | 16 b. Ever.                     | 598      | 1 t. ! after us.              | "        | 9 t. dele Which fadeth not      |
| "        | 15 b. would, for shall—, after  | "        | 3 t. dele , after Extended.   | "        | away ;                          |
| "        | Bless—add in the Realms         | "        | 15 t. , after themselves.     | "        | 10 t. the, for our.             |
| "        | of Everlasting Day.             | "        | 25 t. VINE.                   | "        | 11 t. That.                     |
| "        | 5 b. Day—Hour—Wherein.          | "        | 7 b. , after assumed.         | "        | 17 t. , after Exemplify.        |
| 588      | 5 t. DAVID.                     | "        | 4 b. Thereof.                 | "        | 23 t. Which.                    |
| "        | 9 t. with the before thought.   | "        | 1 b. 16, for 15.              | "        | 24 t. Merits, for Righteous-    |
| "        | 16 t. designated, for destined. | 599      | 2 t. , after them.            | "        | nness—Hopeful.                  |
| "        | 21 t. That.                     | "        | 10 t. All.                    | "        | 27 t. , after Wisdom—dele       |
| "        | 25 t. ! after results.          | "        | 29 b. that, for and—and may,  | "        | and before Love—Made            |
| "        | 24 b. Baptism.                  | "        | for will—The Tree.            | "        | Manifest, for Laid Open         |
| "        | 10 b. Ready.                    | "        | 28 b. may, for will—The City. | "        | to us—dele and before           |
| "        | 1 b. Condemned.                 | "        | 18 b. , after Sick.           | "        | Where.                          |
| 589      | 10 t. , after with.             | "        | 10 b. ! after Angels.         | "        | 28 t. Contemplation—The Var-    |
| "        | 17 t. Where—Account.            | 600      | 4 t. them, for him.           | "        | ious Attributes.                |
| "        | 20 b. That.                     | "        | 9 t. All.                     | "        | 29 t. dele our—Charms.          |
| "        | 17 b. The Path—Open.            | "        | 13 t. , after Man—This.       | "        | 30 t. Love.                     |
| "        | 8 b. ; after GOD—and first.     | "        | 23 t. All.                    | "        | 31 t. Heavenly Abodes, for      |
| "        | 7 b. dele shall before remain.  | "        | 30 t. received.               | "        | Creation—dele join.             |
| "        | 6 b. after dead—just before.    | "        | 23 b. (or                     | "        | 32 t. unite—dele us—GOD         |
| "        | 5 b. ; after LORD.              | "        | 22 b. Men).                   | "        | and The LAMB—for                |
| "        | 4 b. ; after Words.             | "        | 18 b. Address.                | "        | JEHOVAH, The TRI-               |
| "        | 3 b. This.                      | "        | 7 b. These.                   | "        | UNE GOD.                        |
| 590      | 5 t. , after Men.               | "        | 6 b. Second.                  | "        | 16 b. Had—That.                 |
| "        | 6 t. The Wedding—When.          | 601      | 21 t. These.                  | "        | 15 b. Shrunk.                   |
| "        | 7 t. When.                      | "        | 24 t. The Second.             | "        | 6 b. That.                      |
| "        | 13 t. That.                     | "        | 28 t. So.                     | "        | 4 b. by, for from.              |
| "        | 19 t. The Decrees.              | "        | 29 t. The Judgment.           | "        | 2 b. the Families.              |
| "        | 20 b. Those.                    | "        | 22 b. , after And—The Reve-   | 610      | 1 t. ; after Satan.             |
| "        | 19 b. grieves.                  | "        | lations—The Following.        | "        | 4 t. Thereby, for by That.      |
| "        | 5 b. ! after Interests.         | "        | 21 b. The Same.               | "        | 5 t. dele Blood—Such, for       |
| "        | 1 b. God.                       | "        | 16 b. Which.                  | "        | His.                            |
| 591      | 7 t. That.                      | "        | 13 b. Assembled All.          | "        | 11 t. This.                     |
| "        | 14 b. Same.                     | "        | 12 b. dele the Truest—read,   | "        | 21 t. It after Crucifixion—     |
| "        | 8 b. There.                     | "        | with True.                    | "        | alludes, for alluding.          |
| "        | 7 b. dele shall.                | "        | 10 b. Open.                   | 611      | 4 t. This.                      |
| 592      | 12 t. Children, for Sons.       | "        | 7 b. The Sentence.            | "        | 13 t. Future.                   |
| "        | 18 t. add the before Just.      | 602      | 4 t. Those—Where.             | "        | 21 t. Commemorate.              |
| "        | 19 t. dele Men.                 | "        | 6 t. There.                   | "        | 25 t. , after Imagination.      |
| "        | 20 t. Where.                    | "        | 7 t. There.                   | "        | 28 t. dele, after Satan—; after |
| 593      | 15 t. , after resist.           | "        | 8 t. Them.                    | "        | Death.                          |

Pa. line.  
 611 19 b. The INNOCENT.  
 " 17 b. Blood-Yielding, for  
 " Blood-Shedding.  
 " 10 b. So.  
 " 6 b. I after neglect.  
 612 1 t., after danger.  
 " 2 t., after in.  
 " 10 t. The Truth—The Life.  
 " 22 t. dele they—deceived.  
 " 26 t. The New.  
 " 17 b. The HOLY.  
 " 4 b. Open—The Day.  
 " 2 b. This.  
 613 22 t. This.  
 " 25 t. The Way.  
 " 26 t. All.  
 " 27 t. I after Him.  
 " 28 t. This.  
 " 8 t. A Mission.  
 614 9 t. DAY SPRING.  
 " 17 t. His.  
 " 27 t., after Disciples.  
 " 15 b. dele is after means—add  
 is after he.  
 " 1 b. among.  
 615 4 t. The Things.  
 " 7 t. Which.  
 " 18 t. Which.  
 " 19 t. Shewed.  
 " 2 t. So.  
 " 13 b. This.  
 616 11 t. toucheth.  
 " 13 t. Say.  
 " 26 t. That.  
 " 27 t. Faith Saved.  
 " 23 b. This.  
 " 15 b., after observation.  
 617 1 t. This.  
 " 14 t. They—They.  
 " 18 t. Godliness.  
 " 24 t. The Two.  
 " 24 b. reflection.  
 " 17 b. Acceptable.  
 " 11 b., after this.  
 618 7 b. Which.  
 619 10 t. Which.  
 " 11 t. The Coming.  
 " 26 t. Immenality—Debt—All.  
 " 27 t. All.  
 " 28 t. This.  
 " 18 b. Which Calms—Tran-  
 quillises.  
 " 13 b. Which.  
 " 12 b., after mistake.  
 620 7 t. All.  
 " 12 t. The Fulness.  
 " 13 t. All.  
 " 20 b. Divine.  
 " 14 b. (may  
 " 13 b. us)  
 621 2 t. The Judgment.  
 " 8 t. All—Being—All.  
 " 22 b. All.  
 " 21 b. dele their.  
 622 7 t. own after our.  
 " 10 t. That.  
 " 20 t., after mercy—dele  
 after charity.  
 " 20 b. Reat.  
 " 19 b. Where.  
 " 17 b. Which.  
 " 16 b. That.  
 " 11 b. dele, after done.  
 " 7 b., after but.  
 " 3 b. All.  
 " 2 b. A Pure.  
 623 22 t. All.  
 " 24 t. with before Grace.  
 " 27 t., after Many.  
 " 22 b. This.  
 " 10 b. dele the.  
 " 2 b. read, well will it be—  
 dele will well.  
 624 23 t. The Former.  
 " 18 b. it after attribute.  
 625 9 t. Birthright—Birthright.

Pa. line.  
 625 14 t. Satan before still.  
 " 15 t. JESUS for He.  
 " 16 t., after temptations—  
 Crucifixion.  
 " 29 t., after consequences.  
 " 9 b., after destruction—  
 then.  
 " 2 b. An.  
 " 1 b., after opportunity.  
 626 3 t. Communing.  
 " 8 t. The Presence—on, for of.  
 " 9 t. on, for of.  
 " 22 t., after Himself.  
 " 22 b. Have after Day—  
 Brought.  
 " 15 b. an holy—an holy.  
 " 10 b. institutions.  
 " 1 b. That.  
 627 2 t. Which Typified That.  
 " 6 t. The Great.  
 " 8 t. HOLY.  
 " 9 t. Such, for That.  
 " 18 t. Which.  
 " 20 t., after Earth.  
 " 24 t. NATURE.  
 " 23 b. What.  
 " 20 b. Such.  
 " 4 b. That.  
 628 1 t. That.  
 " 5 t., after say.  
 " 25 t. water.  
 " 16 b. Purpose.  
 " 13 b. Us.  
 " 12 b. said.  
 629 4, 5, & 6 t. dele all after him  
 —from and finally—to  
 against it—Matt. xvi. 19  
 —which see.  
 " 7 t. They.  
 " 14 t. said.  
 " 18 t. HOLY.  
 " 19 t., after Foreshadowed.  
 " 20 t. That.  
 " 22 t. Their.  
 " 23 t. The Fount.  
 " 24 t. then, for thus.  
 " 27 t., after Declaration.  
 " 14 b. Thereby—Proof.  
 " 4 b. This.  
 " 1 b. A Supremacy.  
 630 5 t. dele, after Occurrence.  
 " 31 t. This Thing.  
 " 18 b. Which.  
 631 2 t. Who.  
 " 3 t. dele, after He.  
 " 17 t. said.  
 " 19 b. That.  
 " 16 b. That.  
 " 6 b. after participate, add in  
 a Spiritual sense.  
 " 5 b. That.  
 " 2 b., after way.  
 632 17 b., before or, and after  
 sin.  
 " 15 b. The Same.  
 " 13 b. as much, for equally.  
 " 4 b.: after us.  
 633 3 t. PRESENCE — expe-  
 riencing after Joy of.  
 " 5 t. All Things.  
 " 7 t. Consideration.  
 " 9 t. That.  
 " 15 t. They.  
 " 17 t. Their.  
 " 26 t., after Words.  
 " 19 b. Them.  
 " 16 b. The Words.  
 " 4 b. Work.  
 634 15 t. happily, for haply.  
 " 20 t. Foretold.  
 " 21 t. Things.  
 " 22 t. That.  
 " 25 t. Foretold.  
 " 27 t. on, for in.  
 " 9 b. Things—Nought.  
 " 4 b. All.

Pa. line.  
 634 3 b. All The.  
 " 1 b. The Words.  
 635 10 t. 3 after 2.  
 " 17 t. That.  
 " 20 t. (and) Which  
 " 22 t. 12.)—The Revelation.  
 " 25 t. dele, after CHRIST.  
 " 29 t. Which.  
 " 17 b. also, for thus—, after  
 characterized.  
 " 8 b. amongst.  
 636 12 t. That.  
 " 16 t. That.  
 " 17 t. That.  
 " 21 t. dele the before Grace—  
 by, for of.  
 " 24 b. The Bread.  
 " 6 b. The Bread Which.  
 637 3 t. Whole—That.  
 " 14 t. for before an.  
 " 25 t. Iniquities.  
 " 21 b. Came.  
 " 19 b. The Consciousness.  
 " 18 b. An—Thought.  
 " 16 b. The Fulness.  
 " 15 b. Am.  
 " 14 b. Am.  
 " 3 b. So.  
 " 1 b. Which.  
 638 2 t.; after SPIRIT.  
 " 18 t. End after This (to—So  
 —Acceptable.)  
 " 19 t. dele End.  
 " 23 t. Speaking.  
 " 18 b. The Glory.  
 " 17 b. They.  
 " 9 b., after Made.  
 639 13 t., after Came and Right-  
 eous.  
 " 21 t. dele so after when—So  
 after Who.  
 " 22 t. dele, after Satan.  
 " 24 b. Foundation.  
 " 23 b. Commemorating — Ge-  
 nerations.  
 " 22 b. The Price.  
 " 20 b. The DIVINE.  
 " 12 b. his.  
 640 1 t. BREAD twice.  
 " 3 t. BREAD.  
 " 4 t. dele And.  
 " 7 t. BREAD.  
 " 31 b. himself—dele, after.  
 " 30 b. They.  
 " 4 b. All.  
 641 6 t. Lump—Grace.  
 " 13 t. The Pure.  
 " 18 t. That.  
 " 27 b. SPIRITUAL.  
 " 25 b. Life-Yielding, for Blood-  
 Shedding.  
 " 6 b.; after Egypt.  
 642 9 t. Baptised.  
 " 15 t. Sins.  
 " 16 t. saith.  
 " 25 t. The Atonement.  
 " 26 t. Sin—Sin.  
 " 11 b. The Atonement.  
 " 4 b. A Better.  
 " 2 b.; after PRIESTHOOD.  
 643 4 t. Peoples'.  
 " 5 t. Did.  
 " 6 t. The Oath.  
 " 10 t. A Better.  
 " 12 t. The Second.  
 " 19 t. The Holy.  
 " 22 b. The Holy.  
 " 19 b. others.  
 " 16 b. The Judgment—So.  
 " 2 b. Hadst.  
 " 1 b. Said He.  
 644 8 t. A Witness.  
 " 11 t. Them.  
 " 15 t. The Holiest.  
 " 24 t. Day.  
 " 26 t. Indignation.

Pa. line.  
 644 12 b. Separate—This.  
 " 11 b. Which.  
 " 7 b. , after them.  
 " 2 b. MAN.  
 645 1 t. holy.  
 " 24 t. ; after Footstool.  
 " 29 t. for Altar of GOD, read,  
 " Table of The LORD.  
 " 14 b. , after slow.  
 " 2 b. Communion.  
 646 7 t. Application.  
 " 22 t. for The Fulness.  
 " 26 t. add after His, being in  
 " The TRINITY of THE  
 " GODHEAD.  
 " 20 b. Whom.  
 " 13 b. The Consummation.  
 " 7 b. That—Set.  
 " 6 b. The Bosom.  
 " 1 b. MAN.  
 647 1 t. Hosts.  
 " 7 t. my.  
 " 14 t. Here.  
 " 21 t. Which.  
 " 22 t. Which.  
 " 29 t. , after scattered.  
 " 20 b. What.  
 " 19 b. What.  
 " 10 b. So.  
 " 9 b. The Sacred.  
 " 2 b. for before He, . before  
 " Come.  
 648 15 b. on, for in.  
 " 12 b. That.  
 " 3 b. , after Foretold and  
 " hearing.  
 649 5 t. So.  
 " 9 t. , after Sake.  
 " 12 t. Adored.  
 " 15 t. , after sunbeam.  
 650 9 t. Rest.  
 " 15 t. Objects.  
 " 18 t. by, for and, after Power.  
 " 19 t. Faith.  
 " 20 b. Same.  
 " 5 b. Support, for Susten-  
 " ance.  
 " 3 b. This.  
 651 12 t. This.  
 " 11 b. NATURE.  
 " 6 b. The Bosom—The Ful-  
 " ness.  
 652 7 t. Consequences.  
 " 21 t. ; after God.  
 " 22 t. Then without,  
 " 24 t. ! Incultated.  
 " 28 t. Wrang.  
 " 30 t. This.  
 " 18 b. The Character.  
 " 11 b. , after little.  
 " 10 b. The Hour.  
 653 1 t. The Hour.  
 " 2 t. Their.  
 " 4 t. So.  
 " 22 b. Hour.  
 " 21 b. Wicked.  
 " 17 b. Instance—All.  
 " 16 b. The MAN.  
 " 2 b. The Agony.  
 654 6 t. The Passion.  
 " 17 t. of his.  
 " 19 t. The Trial.  
 " 20 b. The Prince.  
 " 17 b. Sin.  
 " 14 b. The Hour.  
 " 13 b. When.  
 " 10 b. So.  
 " 6 b. Necessary.  
 " 3 b. Said.  
 " 2 b. ! after Done.  
 " 1 b. The Great.  
 655 8 t. That Support.  
 " 9 t. All.  
 " 10 t. Object.  
 " 12 t. Thus.  
 " 17 t. So.

Pa. line.  
 655 23 t. This Conditional—For-  
 " mer.  
 " 24 t. Latter.  
 " 25 t. Confirmatory—All.  
 " 29 t. This.  
 " 9 b. as MAN.  
 " 5 b. ; after GOD.  
 " 1 b. Obedience.  
 656 8 t. Agency Agency  
 " 11 t. , after 23.  
 " 12 t. Militant.  
 " 20 b. All.  
 " 16 b. Flesh.  
 " 10 b. distinguishingly.  
 657 1 t. All.  
 " 11 t. Faith.  
 " 13 t. Flesh.  
 " 21 t. Flesh.  
 " 16 b. , after is.  
 " 12 b. Flesh.  
 " 11 b. Flesh.  
 " 10 b. Flesh.  
 " 9 b. Flesh—Flesh.  
 658 16 b. This.  
 " 13 b. Many.  
 " 8 b. Hereafter.  
 " 2 b. So.  
 659 5 t. , after Immortal.  
 " 17 t. That.  
 " 24 t. The Hour.  
 " 25 t. Us.  
 " 28 t. Awaited.  
 " 22 b. putting.  
 " 15 b. All.  
 " 14 b. Evil.  
 " 8 b. The Hour.  
 " 6 b. Hour.  
 " 2 b. Sleep.  
 660 4 t. ; after Joy.  
 " 6 t. Which.  
 " 8 t. Inferrible.  
 " 12 t. It—Enough—The Hour.  
 " 14 t. Us.  
 " 15 t. Enough.  
 " 19 t. The Hour.  
 " 23 t. Therein.  
 " 24 t. Borne.  
 " 25 t. ; after ours, , after is.  
 " 24 b. Occasion—Their.  
 " 3 b. All.  
 " 2 b. The Highest.  
 661 11 t. Exhaustless—That.  
 " 22 t. , after on.  
 " 23 t. The Only.  
 " 14 b. Features.  
 " 1 b. That.  
 662 7 t. The Saying.  
 " 8 t. Them.  
 " 25 t. This.  
 " 27 t. Confirmation.  
 " 5 b. Which.  
 663 14 t. That.  
 " 22 t. Footstool.  
 " 25 t. Issues.  
 " 23 b. All—All.  
 " 21 b. All.  
 " 15 b. dele But—, after Came.  
 " 12 b. All.  
 " 11 & 10 b. Thereat (and should  
 " —Do It ?)  
 " 7 b. Became.  
 " 4 b. High.  
 " 1 b. after upon it, add, and  
 " of The Miracle Wrought  
 " by Him, in Restoring at  
 " once the Servant's ear to  
 " its unsuffering and useful  
 " functions.  
 664 4 t. High.  
 " 13 t. Transcendancy—The  
 " DIVINITY.  
 " 25 t. This.  
 " 26 t. : after Chain.  
 " 17 b. Work.  
 " 16 b. , after All—That—, after  
 " sword.

Pa. line.  
 664 14 b. The DIVINE  
 " 3 b. They.  
 665 12 t. Them.  
 " 13 t. Future.  
 " 14 t. MAN.  
 " 24 t. The Same.  
 " 13 b. All.  
 " 12 b. The Fulness.  
 666 2 t. unto for to.  
 " 4 t. The Words.  
 " 20 t. All This—The Prophets.  
 " 21 t. Fulfilled—All.  
 " 25 b. A Power—Which ,  
 " 24 b. Stand.  
 " 22 b. This.  
 " 18 b. This.  
 " 10 b. This.  
 " 9 b. Hour.  
 " 6 b. A Sufficient.  
 667 22 t. Incident.  
 668 3 t. Prophecy.  
 " 22 t. dele , after distinction.  
 " 23 t. That.  
 " 27 t. , after judgment.  
 " 6 b. , after accusation.  
 669 2 t. This.  
 " 16 b. perjured.  
 " 13 b. The Meek.  
 670 7 t. That.  
 " 14 t. Made.  
 " 19 b. Those.  
 " 5 b. Them.  
 " 1 b. brought.  
 671 13 t. That.  
 " 21 t. Silence.  
 " 10 b. alleged Pretensions.  
 " 2 b. Tried—Found.  
 672 7 t. MEDIATORIAL  
 " OFFICE.  
 " 17 b. Father-in-law.  
 " 4 b. : after God.  
 673 28 b. SPIRITUAL.  
 " 20 b. Wonders.  
 674 5 t. , after sin.  
 " 17 b. SPIRITUAL—When.  
 675 1 t. dele last the.  
 " 6 t. , after Such.  
 " 7 t. Caught.  
 " 16 t. SPIRITUAL.  
 676 24 t. they before filled.  
 " 29 t. He.  
 " 10 b. The Fulness.  
 677 11 b. , after ALMIGHTY.  
 678 21 t. The Word.  
 " 20 b. dele , after Truth.  
 " 5 b. , after Displeasure.  
 679 5 t. dele , after Destination.  
 " 12 t. Him.  
 " 26 t. Fulfilment.  
 " 20 b. once—for one.  
 " 13 b. ! after been.  
 " 6 b. Which after Look.  
 " 4 b. that for which.  
 680 12 b. His.  
 681 9 t. , after apparent.  
 " 16 t. nor for or.  
 " 11 b. The Office.  
 " 10 b. JESUS.  
 682 21 t. The Highest.  
 " 21 b. Kindled.  
 683 11 t. They.  
 " 13 t. The Unoffending.  
 " 25 b. Fulfilled.  
 " 16 b. Blood.  
 684 1 t. dele , after parts.  
 " 7 t. Which.  
 " 15 t. Grace.  
 685 30 b. ; after refuge.  
 " 26 b. For.  
 " 23 b. SPIRITUAL.  
 " 19 b. Souls'.  
 " 17 b. Which.  
 " 9 b. The Office—A New.  
 686 16 b. Hence.  
 " 9 b. A KING.  
 " 5 b. Hence.

Pa. line.  
 686 1 b. An.  
 687 1 t. All.  
 " 6 t. Hence.  
 " 7 t. This.  
 " 17 t. This.  
 " 24 t. The FATHER.  
 " 19 b. Accepted.  
 " 18 b. This.  
 " 4 b. after Witnesses—and.  
 688 3 t. Which.  
 " 4 t. Shew.  
 " 14 t. Revelation.  
 " 24 t. Actually.  
 " 9 b. after It.  
 689 16 t. dele, after Spiritual.  
 " 18 t. dele, after faith.  
 " 5 b. Seat.  
 690 10 t. The Ransom.  
 " 14 t., after but.  
 " 15 t. persuasion.  
 " 22 t. Such.  
 " 27 t. Which.  
 691 25 t. This.  
 692 5 t. Him.  
 " 7 t. All.  
 " 17 b. All.  
 " 13 b. Him—Him.  
 " 12 b. Him—Him—Him.  
 693 7 t. Fulness.  
 " 12 t. Their—They.  
 " 25 b. Necessity.  
 " 23 b. That—What Supplication.  
 " 16 b. The Life-Blood—The Immaculate.  
 " 12 b. Valley.  
 694 25 b.; after Expiated.  
 " 19 b. That Title.  
 " 8 b. This.  
 696 1 t. All.  
 " 21 b. Chief.  
 697 13 t. Thence.  
 " 7 b. That.  
 698 23 b. Amended.  
 " 20 b. dele, after wickedness.  
 " 3 b. These Things.  
 699 16 t. Faith.  
 " 23 t., after Consolation.  
 " 9 b. Nature.  
 " 4 b. sin.  
 700 1 t. Generations.  
 " 14 t. This Part.  
 701 5 t. Apostacy.  
 " 9 t. Foretold.  
 " 26 t. The Irreversible.  
 " 27 t. SPIRITUAL.  
 " 23 b. What—, after do.  
 " 9 b. Superscription.  
 " 2 b.; after CHRIST.  
 702 7 t. To-day.  
 " 16 t. And.  
 " 22 t. Two.  
 " 23 t. Title.  
 " 18 b. dele, after Mary.  
 " 10 b. Chief.  
 703 16 t. Thoughts.  
 704 11 t. after alas.  
 " 27 b. Faith.  
 705 5 t. Necessary.  
 " 6 t. Requisite.  
 " 14 t. A VOICE.  
 " 19 t. dele, after clean.  
 " 10 t. dele, after objecteth.  
 " 21 t. dele, after infamy.  
 " 24 t. Men's.  
 " 26 t. Blessed.  
 " 28 t. him!  
 " 29 t., after Enemies.  
 " 5 b. Hath.  
 " 4 b. Ungodly.  
 706 6 t. Spirit.  
 " 11 t. Professors.  
 " 28 t. One for The.  
 " 29 t. The SPIRITUAL NATURE.  
 " 6 b. The Ghost.

Pa. line.  
 706 5 b., after was—dele and.  
 707 2 t. Thus.  
 " 6 t. horizon.  
 " 22 t. since for when.  
 " 24 t., after Way—Which.  
 " 20 b. This.  
 " 19 b. Its Height.  
 708 3 t. In before Self.  
 " 5 t. The Crucifying.  
 " 7 t. They.  
 " 18 t. sponge.  
 " 24 t. This.  
 " 30 t. This.  
 " 21 b. sponge.  
 709 2 t. the Ghost.  
 " 3 t. the Spirit.  
 " 5 t. the Ghost.  
 " 8 t. the Ghost.  
 " 10 t. Vinegar.  
 " 11 t. the Ghost.  
 " 16 t., after Sacrifice.  
 " 23 b. Apostacy.  
 " 18 b. lie.  
 " 4 b. That Upward.  
 " 2 b. Spirit—the Ghost.  
 710 2 t. This.  
 " 6 t. Living.  
 " 8 t. MAN.  
 " 11 t. That.  
 " 15 t. Changed.  
 " 22 t. That.  
 " 27 t. immovable.  
 " 21 b., after may.  
 " 5 b. The SON.  
 711 1 t., after Holies.  
 " 8 t. The most.  
 " 10 t. The Holy.  
 " 18 t. Apostacy.  
 " 1 b. Were.  
 712 12 b. Occasion.  
 " 6 b. The Wonder-Working—Which.  
 713 14 t. Him.  
 714 16 t., after tomb.  
 " 23 t. The Earthly.  
 715 4 t., after He.  
 " 21 t. Counsellor.  
 " 28 t. Laid.  
 " 19 b., after And—This,  
 " 18 b. (being—Jews,)—dele, after secretly.  
 " 15 b. (which night).  
 716 5 t. dele again.  
 " 8 t. That.  
 " 12 t. Watch.  
 " 3 b. dele, after prejudice.  
 717 10 t., after Who and prove.  
 " 14 t. Which.  
 718 13 t. What.  
 " 14 and 15 t. join the paragraphs.  
 " 20 t. Sword.  
 " 28 t. HE.  
 " 22 b., after James.  
 " 8 b. dele, after Death—Grave.  
 " 7 b. Circumstances.  
 " 6 b. Some.  
 719 18 b. That.  
 720 14 t. Known—Knowledge.  
 " 19 t. The Fallen.  
 " 16 b. Transaction.  
 " 15 b., after Mary's.  
 721 4 t. unto for to.  
 " 12 t. Which.  
 " 25 b. Truth.  
 " 12 b. Thereby.  
 " 4 b. What.  
 " 1 b. Where.  
 722 3 t. Advanced.  
 " 8 t. (St. Mark) after he.  
 " 9 t. Them.  
 " 10 t. This.  
 " 11 t. Which.  
 " 22 b. where for were.  
 " 14 b. dele, after FATHER.

Pa. line.  
 722 13 b. dele, after My GOD.  
 " 10 b., after stone.  
 " 6 b. A DIVINE.  
 " 5 b. Circumstances.  
 " 4 b. Such.  
 " 1 b., after John.  
 723 9 t. The supposed.  
 " 19 t. Whole.  
 " 18 b. SPIRITUAL.  
 " 15 b. The Spirit.  
 " 7 b., after But.  
 724 28 t., before and.  
 " 17 b., after Salvation.  
 " 15 b. into for unto.  
 " 14 b., after World—before and.  
 725 24 b. This Circumstance.  
 " 16 b. He.  
 726 3 t. Chief.  
 " 18 t. Inferrible.  
 " 22 t. Unapproachable.  
 " 27 t. Chief.  
 " 29 t. The Crucified.  
 727 3 t. after doubted, add, Besides it was intended to embalm The Body in the very Sepulchre.  
 " 15 t. What There.  
 " 16 t. dele, after Repair.  
 " 23 b. That.  
 " 22 b., after Magdalene—That.  
 " 9 b., after walk.  
 " 6 b. Things.  
 " 1 b. dele, after third day.  
 728 1 t. Done.  
 " 7 t. Enter.  
 " 8 t. All The Scriptures.  
 " 12 t. Went.  
 " 29 t. Eat.  
 " 30 t. The Words.  
 " 13 and 12 b. Necessity—Sufficiency—The MEDIAL-TORIAL SACRIFICE.  
 " 7 b. One.  
 729 12 t. Crucified.  
 730 16 t., after Favour.  
 " 10 b. That.  
 " 8 b. More.  
 731 3 t. That Hope.  
 " 6 t. Circumstances.  
 " 11 t. to before adopt.  
 " 15 t.; after Conveys.  
 " 21 t. The Sacrifice.  
 " 25 t. DIVINE.  
 " 26 b. Which.  
 " 21 b. Which Relation.  
 " 19 b. This.  
 " 4 b. should.  
 " 3 b. Law-Giver.  
 732 3 t. MESSIAH's.  
 " 5 t. Hell.  
 " 19 t. A SON.  
 " 22 t. The Government.  
 " 24 t. PEACE.  
 " 18 b.; after together.  
 733 21 t. Bread.  
 " 22 t. ye after eat.  
 " 25 and 23 b. from 25 to 23 remove the marginal J.  
 " 7 b. SPIRITUAL.  
 734 7 t. That.  
 " 8 t. Therein.  
 " 12 t. Evermore;  
 " 13 t. They.  
 " 16 t., after Daniel.  
 " 24 b. PRINCE.  
 735 25 b. Thence.  
 " 26 b. That.  
 " 20 b. SPIRITUAL.  
 " 19 b. Which.  
 " 18 b. All.  
 736 13 b. These.  
 " 11 b. The Holy, ~~dele~~ then, instead of when.  
 " 9 b. dele and after Man;

|           |                                |           |                                 |                           |                                   |
|-----------|--------------------------------|-----------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Pa. line. |                                | Pa. line. |                                 | Pa. line.                 |                                   |
| 736       | 7 b. Thereby for and.          | 749       | 6 t. , after Intercession).     | 762                       | 11 b. and This for Which.         |
| 737       | 1 t. That which.               | "         | 10 t. What. <i>What</i>         | 763                       | 16 t. One.                        |
| "         | 2 t. So.                       | "         | 19 b. ORACLE.                   | "                         | 17 t. dele , after righteousness. |
| "         | 22 t. Say.                     | "         | 2 b. as instead of for.         | 764                       | 22 t. Baptized.                   |
| "         | 25 t. , after give.            | 750       | 21 b. , after he.               | "                         | 4 b. That.                        |
| "         | 28 t. Those.                   | "         | 17 b. The Everlasting.          | 765                       | 16 b. , after Time.               |
| "         | 22 b. , after apprehension.    | "         | 14 b. Them.                     | "                         | 11 b. Therein.                    |
| "         | 21 b. The Omni-Presence.       | 751       | 23 b. A Great VOICE,            | "                         | 2 b. : after where.               |
| "         | 17 b. Appalled.                | "         | 7 b. CHRIST.                    | 766                       | 22 t. The Pure.                   |
| "         | 16 b. he, that Sent.           | "         | 5 b. Such.                      | "                         | 24 t. visible—invisible.          |
| 738       | 18 t. paralyse.                | 752       | 1 t. Man for One.               | 767                       | 14 t. dele And.                   |
| 739       | 3 t. For Peter read Simon, and | "         | 4 t. SPIRITUAL—dele of          | "                         | 16 t. Grace.                      |
|           | add this note:—(Some           | "         | after Glories.                  | "                         | 4 b. The Express.                 |
|           | Commentators . . . have        | "         | 10 b. That.                     | "                         | 2 b. On.                          |
|           | thought that Peter was         | 753       | 3 t. I after JESUS.             | 768                       | 17 t. MAN—, after sins—           |
|           | the companion of Cleopas.      | "         | 21 b. And there.                | dele , after Ever.        |                                   |
|           | Others have imagined           | "         | 15 b. at for on.                | "                         | 23 t. That.                       |
|           | that Luke was such.)           | "         | 18 b. This.                     | "                         | 3, 2 b. Is—Was.                   |
| "         | 24 t. dele after Immortality   | 754       | 21 t. , after they.             | 769                       | 11 t. of before Adoption.         |
| "         | add. , after Joy.              | "         | 24 t. MAN.                      | "                         | 16 t. Them.                       |
| "         | 26 t. Which.                   | "         | 4 b. : after 23.                | "                         | 14 b. add after St. John, or      |
| "         | 10 b. Which.                   | 755       | 1 t. ; after with GOD.          | his Disciple, to whom he  |                                   |
| 740       | 10 t. This Written.            | "         | 5 t. A Name.                    | confidingly delivered the |                                   |
| "         | 14 t. Nathanael.               | "         | 14 t. Being.                    | manuscript of his Narra-  |                                   |
| "         | 18 t. come.                    | "         | 17 t. On.                       | tive of The Gospel,       |                                   |
| "         | 30 t. Ye for you.              | "         | 25 t. dele, after Resurrection. | 770                       | 2 t. Faith.                       |
| "         | 26 b. after there and thereon. | "         | 16 b. , after Salvation—dele    |                           |                                   |
| 741       | 1 t. That.                     | "         | after ).                        |                           |                                   |
| "         | 6 t. ; after Thomas.           | 756       | 1 t. Fleshly.                   |                           |                                   |
| "         | 23 t. , after Him.             | "         | 2 t. Souls'.                    |                           |                                   |
| "         | 11 b. This.                    | "         | 7 t. Faith.                     |                           |                                   |
| "         | 8 b. The Word.                 | "         | 24 t. Thereby.                  |                           |                                   |
| 742       | 18 t. , after belief.          | "         | 30 t. That.                     |                           |                                   |
| "         | 19 t. , before in.             | "         | 15 b. Baptized.                 |                           |                                   |
| "         | 22 b. Those.                   | "         | 7 b. What.                      |                           |                                   |
| "         | 10 b. us for as.               | "         | 5 b. , after those, and vain.   |                           |                                   |
| 743       | 6 t. Thereof.                  | 757       | 10 t. : after GOD.              |                           |                                   |
| "         | 24 b. unto for as to.          | "         | 11 t. we.                       |                           |                                   |
| "         | 16 b. ; after up.              | "         | 14 b. This.                     |                           |                                   |
| 744       | 12 t. humility.                | "         | 9 b. dele Indeed—The im-        |                           |                                   |
| "         | 25 b. This.                    | "         | portance.                       |                           |                                   |
| "         | 20 b. This—Occurrence.         | 758       | 18 b. Inferrible.               |                           |                                   |
| "         | 5 b. The Person.               | "         | 3 b. SAME.                      |                           |                                   |
| 745       | 15 t. inferrible.              | 759       | 6 t. , after therein.           |                           |                                   |
| "         | 25 t. Grace.                   | "         | 7 t. , after Adoption and be-   |                           |                                   |
| "         | 29 t. Thence.                  | "         | lief.                           |                           |                                   |
| "         | 13 b. Baptizing.               | "         | 20 b. The United.               |                           |                                   |
| "         | 11 b. : after Peter—and.       | "         | 14 b. heart.                    |                           |                                   |
| "         | 10 b. , after that.            | 760       | 3 t. dele we.                   |                           |                                   |
| 746       | 21 t. of them.                 | "         | 23 t. to before Cleanse.        |                           |                                   |
| "         | 19 b. The Called.              | "         | 25 t. Grace.                    |                           |                                   |
| "         | 11 b. , after JESUS.           | "         | 16 b. , after me and Baptize,   |                           |                                   |
| 747       | 18 t. in before mind.          | "         | 6 b. Wisdom.                    |                           |                                   |
| "         | 28 t. Which.                   | 761       | 1 t. lxiv. for liv.             |                           |                                   |
| "         | 29 t. Which.                   | "         | 4 t. All.                       |                           |                                   |
| "         | 30 t. departing, in before     | "         | 29 t. ; after thereupon.        |                           |                                   |
|           | among.                         | "         | 20 b. and after GOD.            |                           |                                   |
| 748       | 10 t. ; after destruction.     | "         | 18 b. , after Saints.           |                           |                                   |
| "         | 21 t. Which.                   | 762       | 4 t. Therein.                   |                           |                                   |
| "         | 29 t. The Cherished.           | "         | 11 t. Therein.                  |                           |                                   |
| "         | 18 b. Which.                   | "         | 22 t. Baptizing.                |                           |                                   |

|                           |                                   |           |                             |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------|-----------------------------|
| Pa. line.                 |                                   | Pa. line. |                             |
| 762                       | 11 b. and This for Which.         | 782       | 15 b. Merah to be made      |
| 763                       | 16 t. One.                        |           | Zerph.                      |
| "                         | 17 t. dele , after righteousness. | 773       | 14 b. Mith to be made Ziph. |
| 764                       | 22 t. Baptized.                   | 774       | 29 t. he for and.           |
| "                         | 4 b. That.                        | 776       | 18 t. the before Office.    |
| 765                       | 16 b. , after Time.               | 780       | 14 t. Thereof.              |
| "                         | 11 b. Therein.                    |           |                             |
| "                         | 2 b. : after where.               |           |                             |
| 766                       | 22 t. The Pure.                   |           |                             |
| "                         | 24 t. visible—invisible.          |           |                             |
| 767                       | 14 t. dele And.                   |           |                             |
| "                         | 16 t. Grace.                      |           |                             |
| "                         | 4 b. The Express.                 |           |                             |
| "                         | 2 b. On.                          |           |                             |
| 768                       | 17 t. MAN—, after sins—           |           |                             |
| dele , after Ever.        |                                   |           |                             |
| "                         | 23 t. That.                       |           |                             |
| "                         | 3, 2 b. Is—Was.                   |           |                             |
| 769                       | 11 t. of before Adoption.         |           |                             |
| "                         | 16 t. Them.                       |           |                             |
| "                         | 14 b. add after St. John, or      |           |                             |
| his Disciple, to whom he  |                                   |           |                             |
| confidingly delivered the |                                   |           |                             |
| manuscript of his Narra-  |                                   |           |                             |
| tive of The Gospel,       |                                   |           |                             |
| 770                       | 2 t. Faith.                       |           |                             |

INDEX.

|     |                             |
|-----|-----------------------------|
| 772 | 15 b. Merah to be made      |
|     | Zerph.                      |
| 773 | 14 b. Mith to be made Ziph. |
| 774 | 29 t. he for and.           |
| 776 | 18 t. the before Office.    |
| 780 | 14 t. Thereof.              |

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|     |                              |
|-----|------------------------------|
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|     | 32, at page 206.             |
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|     | 18, 20, 22, 24, at page 206. |
| 785 | Psalms—dele iv. 24, 26, 27,  |
|     | at page 499.                 |

CORRECTIONS AND ALTERATIONS.

|     |                           |
|-----|---------------------------|
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| 620 | 13 b.                     |
| 713 | 8 b.                      |
| 757 | 15 for 16.                |

## INDEX.

- 772 15 b. Merah to be made  
Merge.  
773 14 b. Ziph to be made Ziph.  
774 29 t. he for and.  
776 18 t. the before Office.  
780 14 t. Thereof.

## REFERENCE.

- 781 Exodus—dele v., 12, 21, 29,  
32, at page 206.  
" Exodus—dele xi., 12, 14, 16,  
18, 20, 22, 24, at page 206.  
785 Psalms—dele iv., 24, 26, 27,  
at page 499.

CORRECTIONS AND  
ALTERATIONS.

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